LOVE FINDS THE WAY

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Anne M. Howard
Springfield Mass

Love Finds the Way

Paul Leicester Ford

Author of Janice Meredith etc

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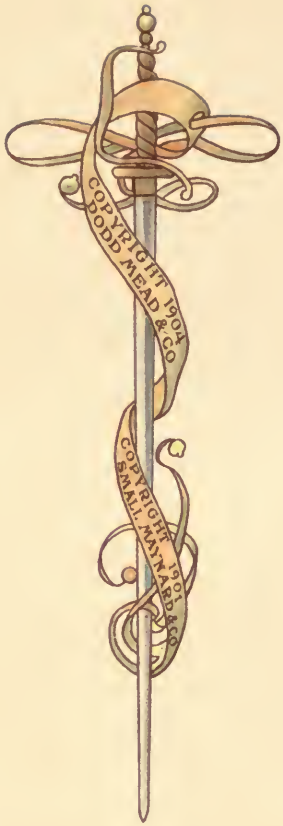

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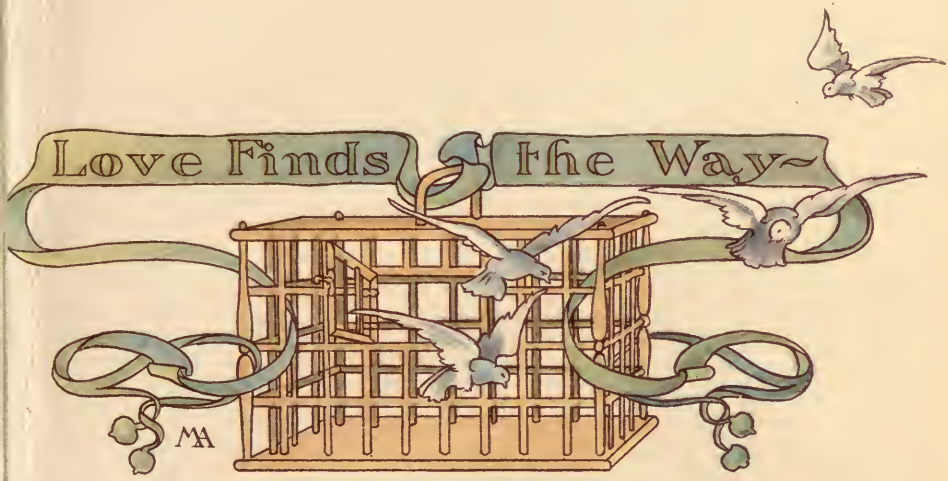
Love Finds the Way~

LOVE FINDS THE WAY

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"I WANT you all to look at that picture closely, and though the flicker of the firelight makes it difficult to see, I think you can detect a curious roughness about the outline of the figure, much as if the cobbler-artist who painted it, finding his technique insufficient to make it project itself from the background, had endeavoured to obtain such an effect by actual

layers of paint. Look at the right shoulder, above the epaulette, and you will perceive what I mean. See how lumpily the paint is laid on?"

"I can't say that I see anything unusual," remarked some one.

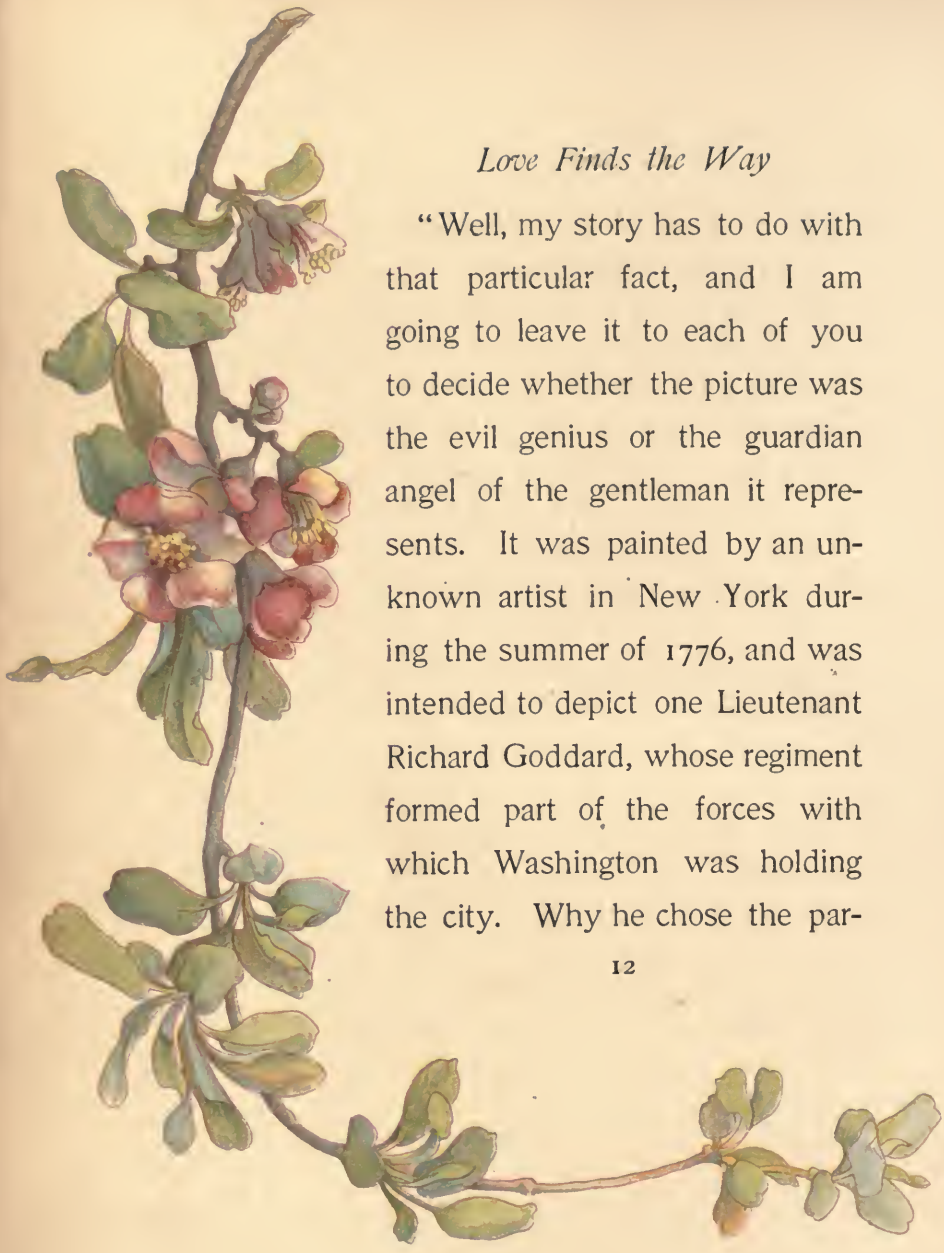
"Then the light comes wrong for you. I'm sure that some of you sit so that you can see to what I refer?"

"Yes, yes, it's very noticeable," acceded a girl to whom the appeal was made.

"As it will be to you all, when I tell you its real nature. Imagine that once that figure was cut from the surrounding canvas by a knife, and that later, when it was restored, the injury was painted out, as well as could be, but inevitably with a thickening of the paint at that point almost into ridges."

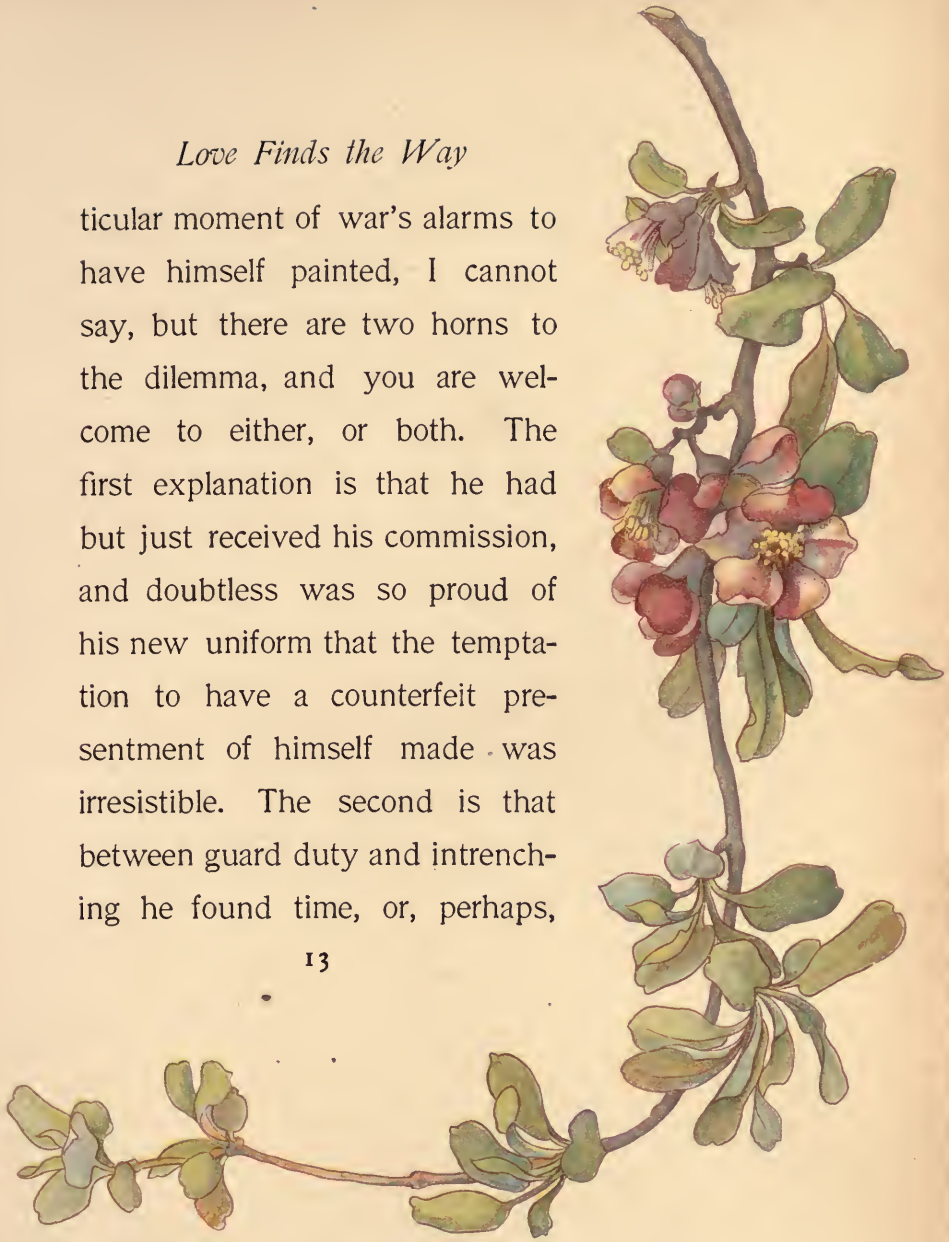
"Yes. I see now what you mean," assented a listener.

"Certainly. It's as plain as can be," agreed a second one.



"Well, my story has to do with that particular fact, and I am going to leave it to each of you to decide whether the picture was the evil genius or the guardian angel of the gentleman it represents. It was painted by an unknown artist in New York during the summer of 1776, and was intended to depict one Lieutenant Richard Goddard, whose regiment formed part of the forces with which Washington was holding the city. Why he chose the par-

ticular moment of war's alarms to have himself painted, I cannot say, but there are two horns to the dilemma, and you are welcome to either, or both. The first explanation is that he had but just received his commission, and doubtless was so proud of his new uniform that the temptation to have a counterfeit presentment of himself made was irresistible. The second is that between guard duty and intrenching he found time, or, perhaps,



as better befitted his calling, killed it, by becoming deeply enamoured with his cousin, Phillis Goelet, and it may have been that it was painted at her behest, or, at least, in the hope that it would find a favour in her eyes, which, if family tradition is to be trusted, the original was slow to achieve. We know for certain that the actual sittings took place at Fairview, her father's home, overlooking the East River, and

about two miles from New York—that is, from Wall Street—though the city then straggled almost a mile farther north. The Captain had been asked by his kinspeople to make his home with them, and he and, I suspect, all the other young officers were with them as much as their military duties allowed; and here on the lawn the portrait was limned, with the old house as a background. One can picture the scene as he

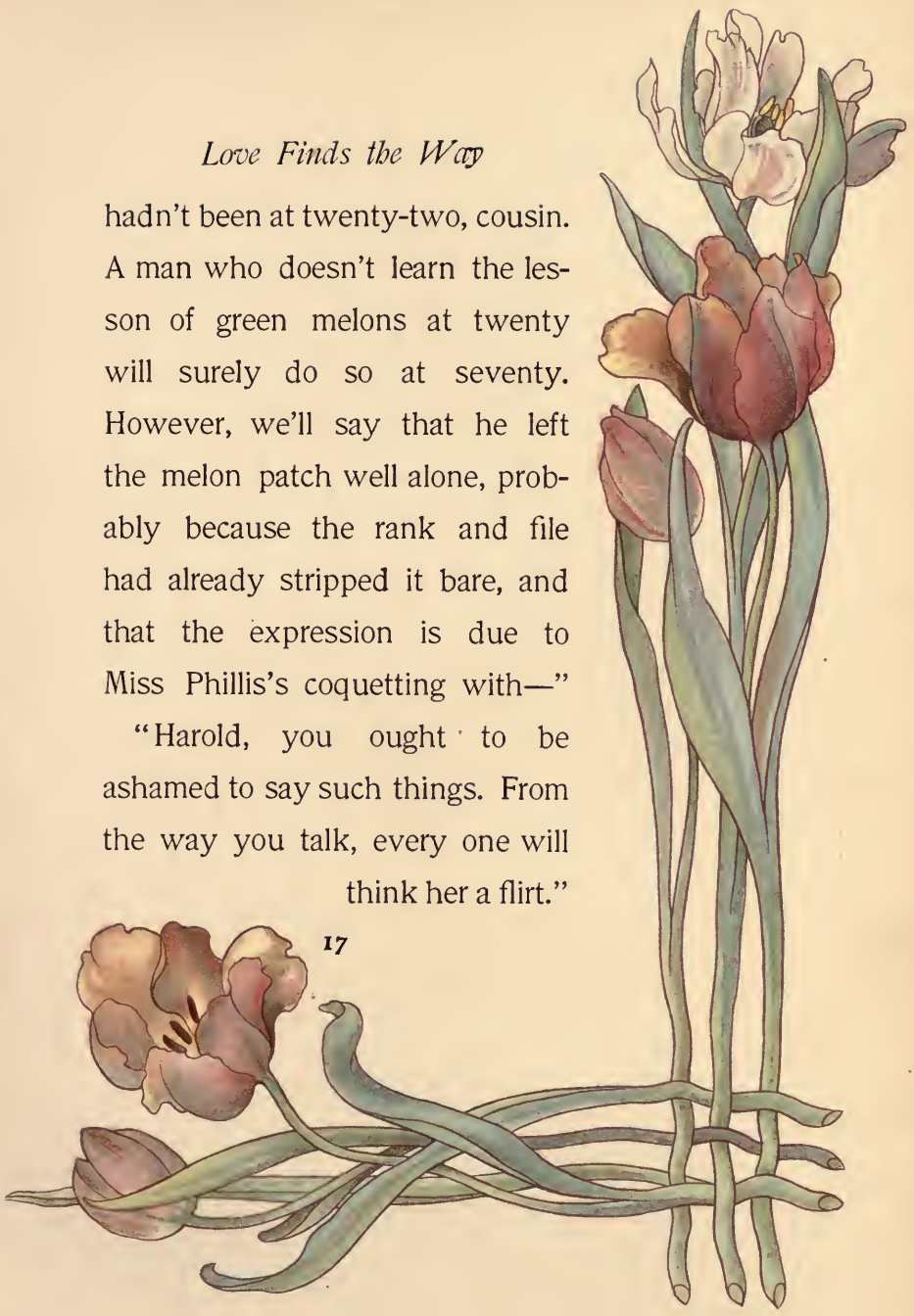
posed and the artist painted, and, to judge from his expression, Miss Phillis is either saying something teasing to him, or else some one of the officers is uttering some piece of gallantry to her. Or do you think it was merely too early in the season for melons?"

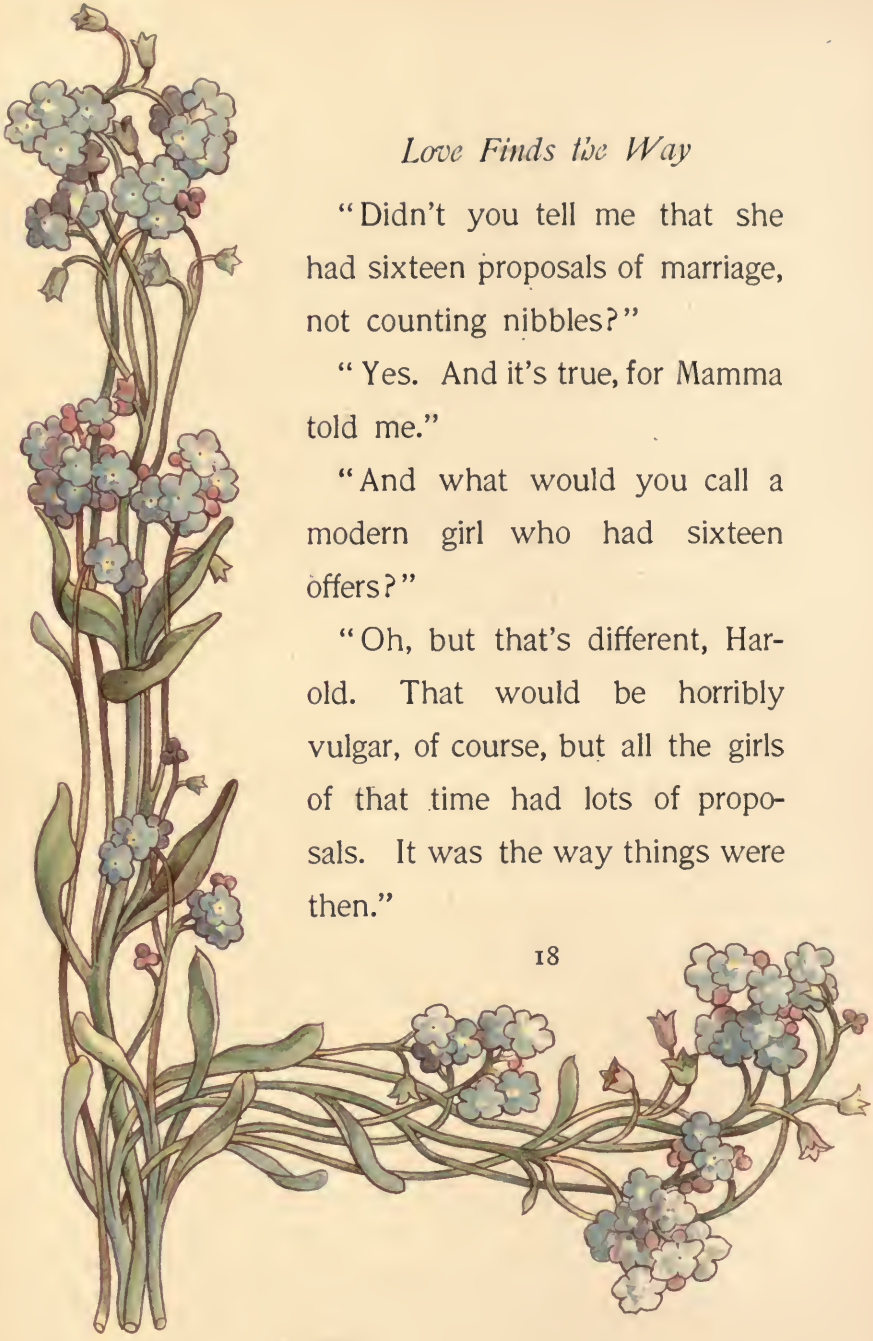
"Harold, how absurd! Grandfather was always very careful what he ate."

"At seventy-nine, yes, but that was because he

hadn't been at twenty-two, cousin. A man who doesn't learn the lesson of green melons at twenty will surely do so at seventy. However, we'll say that he left the melon patch well alone, probably because the rank and file had already stripped it bare, and that the expression is due to Miss Phillis's coquetting with—"

"Harold, you ought to be ashamed to say such things. From the way you talk, every one will think her a flirt."





"Didn't you tell me that she had sixteen proposals of marriage, not counting nibbles?"

"Yes. And it's true, for Mamma told me."

"And what would you call a modern girl who had sixteen offers?"

"Oh, but that's different, Harold. That would be horribly vulgar, of course, but all the girls of that time had lots of proposals. It was the way things were then."

"Then why make boast of it in her case?"

"Why, you see—Pshaw! I don't boast of it, Harold; I only tell of it to prove how beautiful and attractive she was."

"Just as every girl of that generation was, if you'll believe their descendants. But how about the men?"

"Men? What do you mean?" demanded Mrs. Goddard.

"Why, if every girl had a baker's dozen or so of

lovers, what an awful disgrace rests on our grandfathers."

"I don't understand what you mean, Harold."

"That each one was in love a dozen times before he could get a girl to have him. They must have been awful chumps. Really, Lieutenant Dick, I don't wonder that you have the woe-begone look to your mouth, which a moment ago I ascribed to melons. Think of being rejected that often! No wonder they were

"'One glance showed him the cause was up, and with coolness and good sense he calmly sat down on a step.'"

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six and eight bottle men; nothing short of a hogshead would do for me under such a series of disappointments. Their hearts must have looked as if they had been through a stone-breaker set to make top-dressing for macadam roads."

"Harold, you are perfectly unbearable. She was his first and only love."

"Then I suppose eleven other girls were short one proposal each, by his being so ungallant, as well

as unfashionable. How the dear creatures must have hated him."

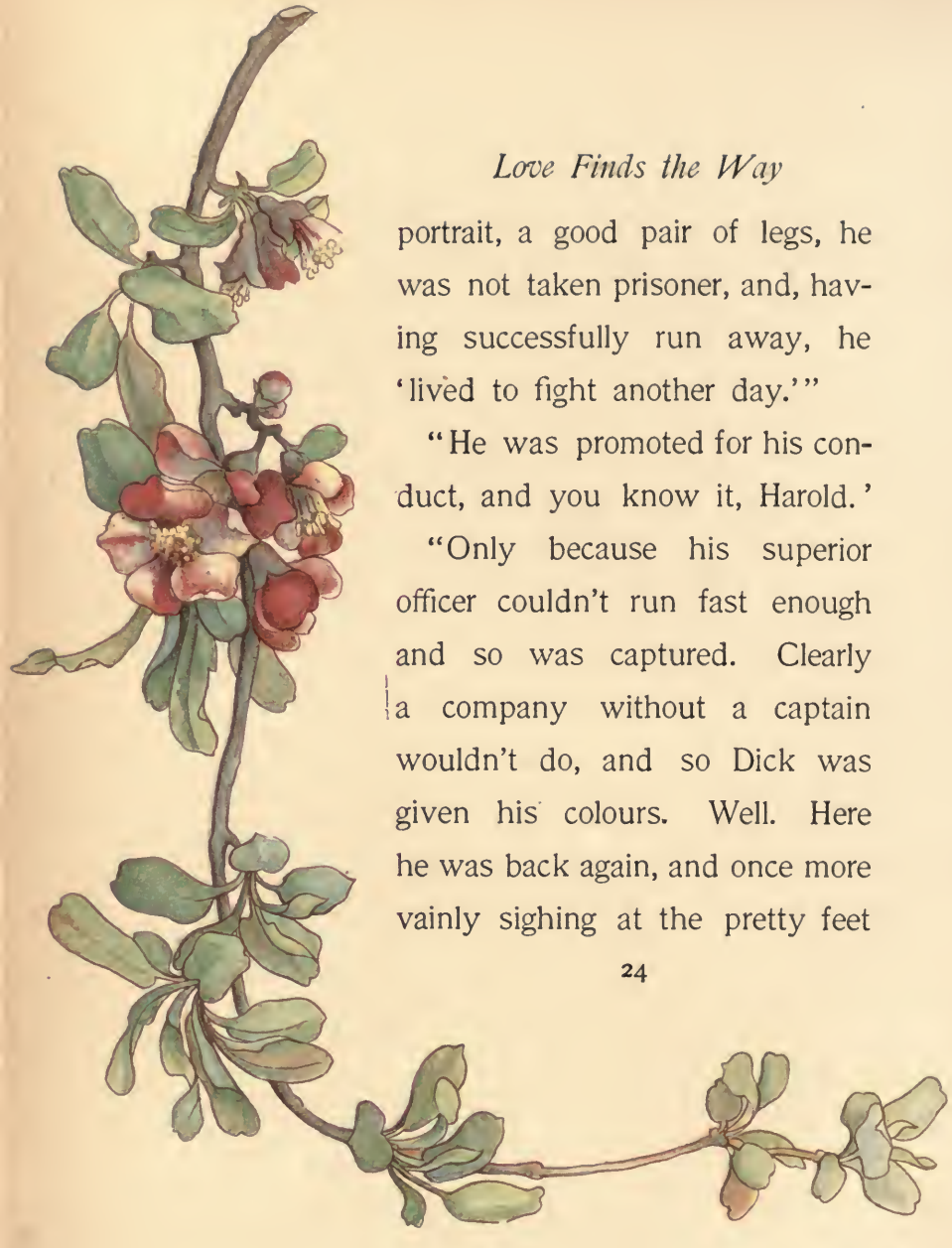
"Nothing of the kind. Mamma assured me he was a great beau."

"Possibly because they liked a variation from the other kind. I should think that what we may term the 'rapid-fire' lovers of that time must have been rather a nuisance. As they usually married before they were much over twenty, they must have proposed at least three or four times a

year. Probably once at each solstice and equinox."

"If you don't stop being silly, and tell your story, I'll begin one in your stead."

"Excuse me, all, for the discursiveness. To resume, Captain Dick sat for his portrait and courted Miss Phillis until early in August, when his regiment was ordered to Brooklyn. There he shared in the drubbing the Continental army got, but, fortunately, having, as you will see by the

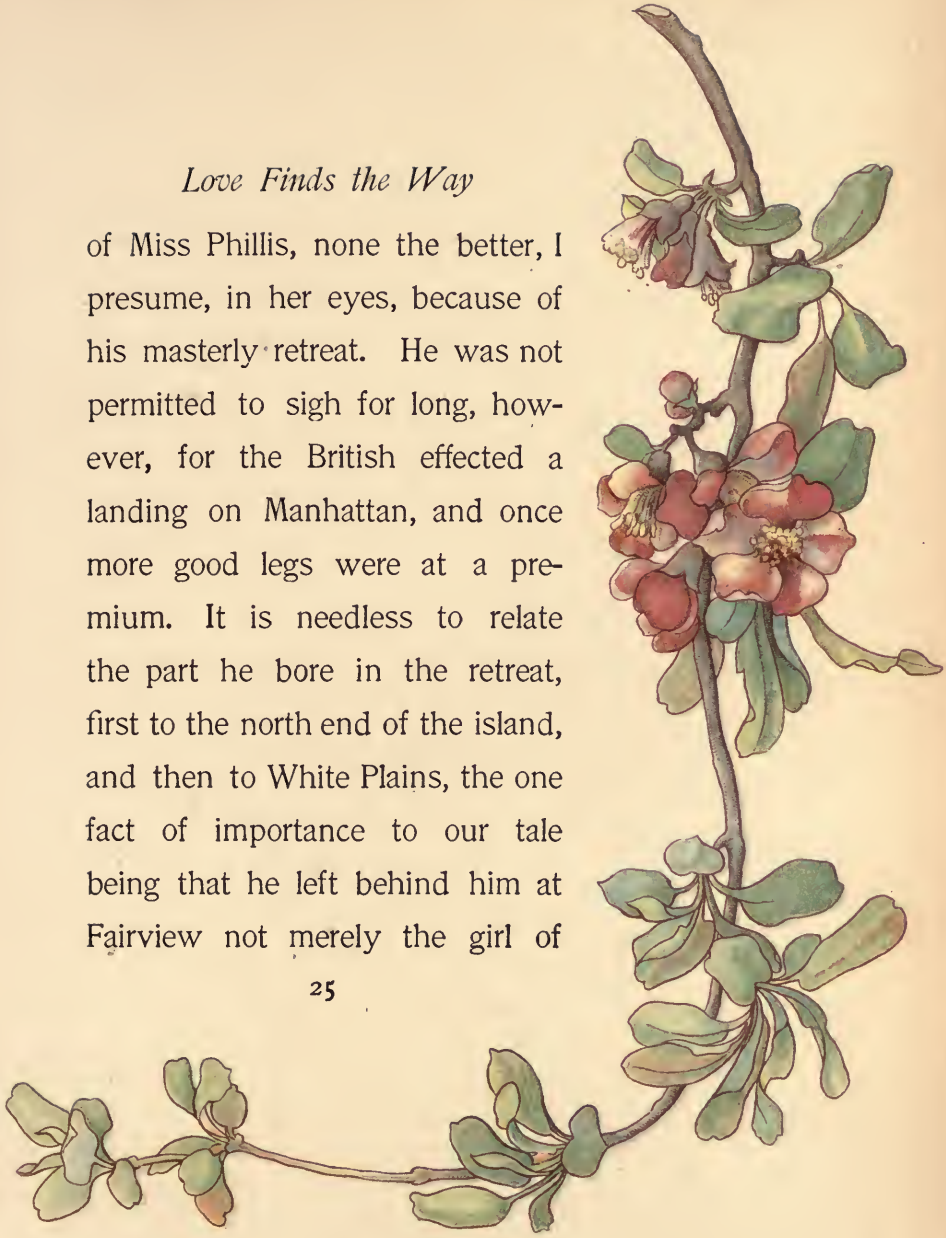


portrait, a good pair of legs, he was not taken prisoner, and, having successfully run away, he 'lived to fight another day.'"

"He was promoted for his conduct, and you know it, Harold.'

"Only because his superior officer couldn't run fast enough and so was captured. Clearly a company without a captain wouldn't do, and so Dick was given his colours. Well. Here he was back again, and once more vainly sighing at the pretty feet

of Miss Phillis, none the better, I presume, in her eyes, because of his masterly retreat. He was not permitted to sigh for long, however, for the British effected a landing on Manhattan, and once more good legs were at a premium. It is needless to relate the part he bore in the retreat, first to the north end of the island, and then to White Plains, the one fact of importance to our tale being that he left behind him at Fairview not merely the girl of

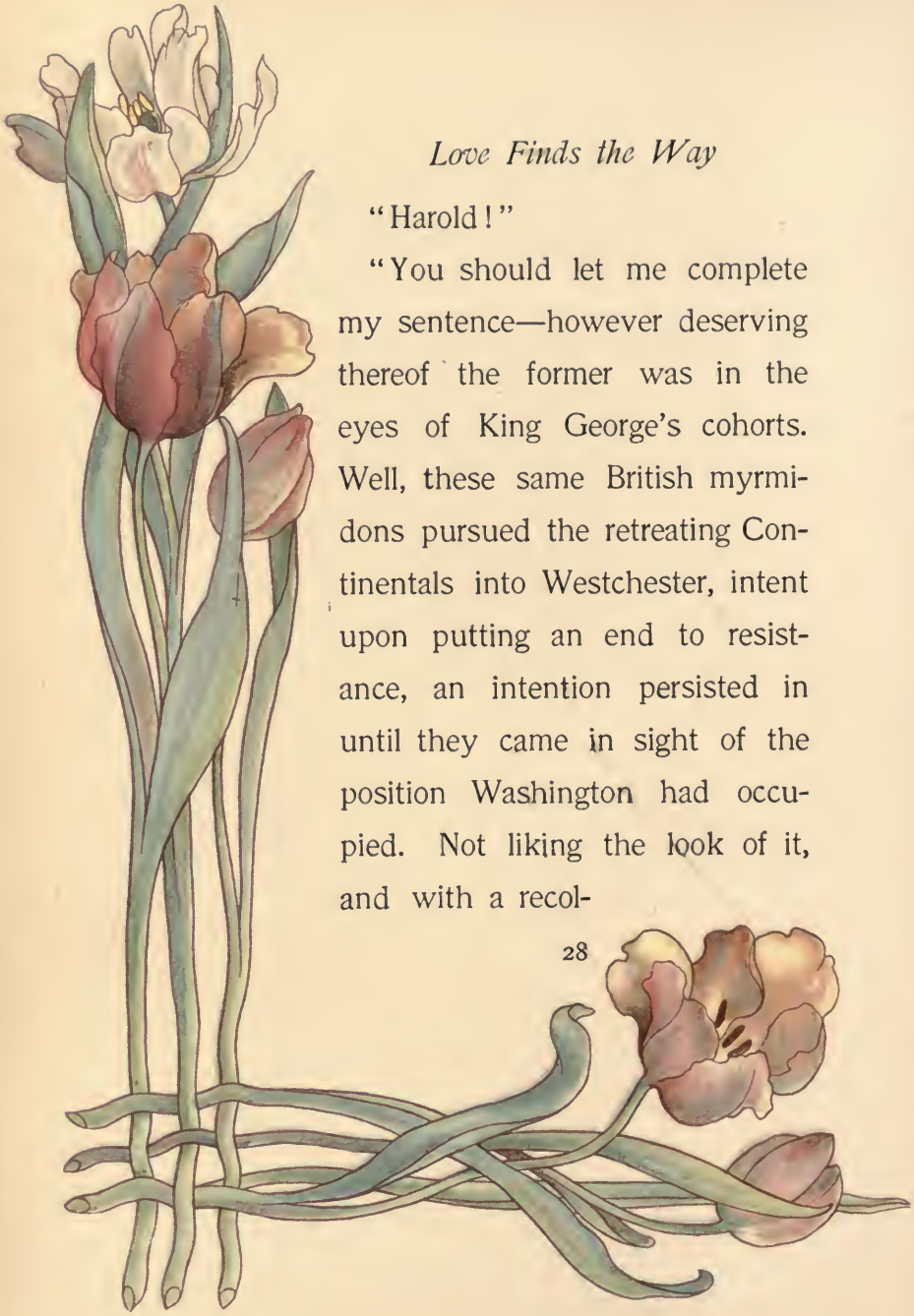


his heart, but the portrait, a full-length canvas not being exactly equipage for a soldier in an active campaign. It is to be hoped that he paid the poor artist—that is, sign painter—before departing."

"It's horrid for you to say such things, Harold, and I don't see how you can do it. I'm sure he paid for it."

"Then he unquestionably did, though I have known the masculine two and twenty sometimes

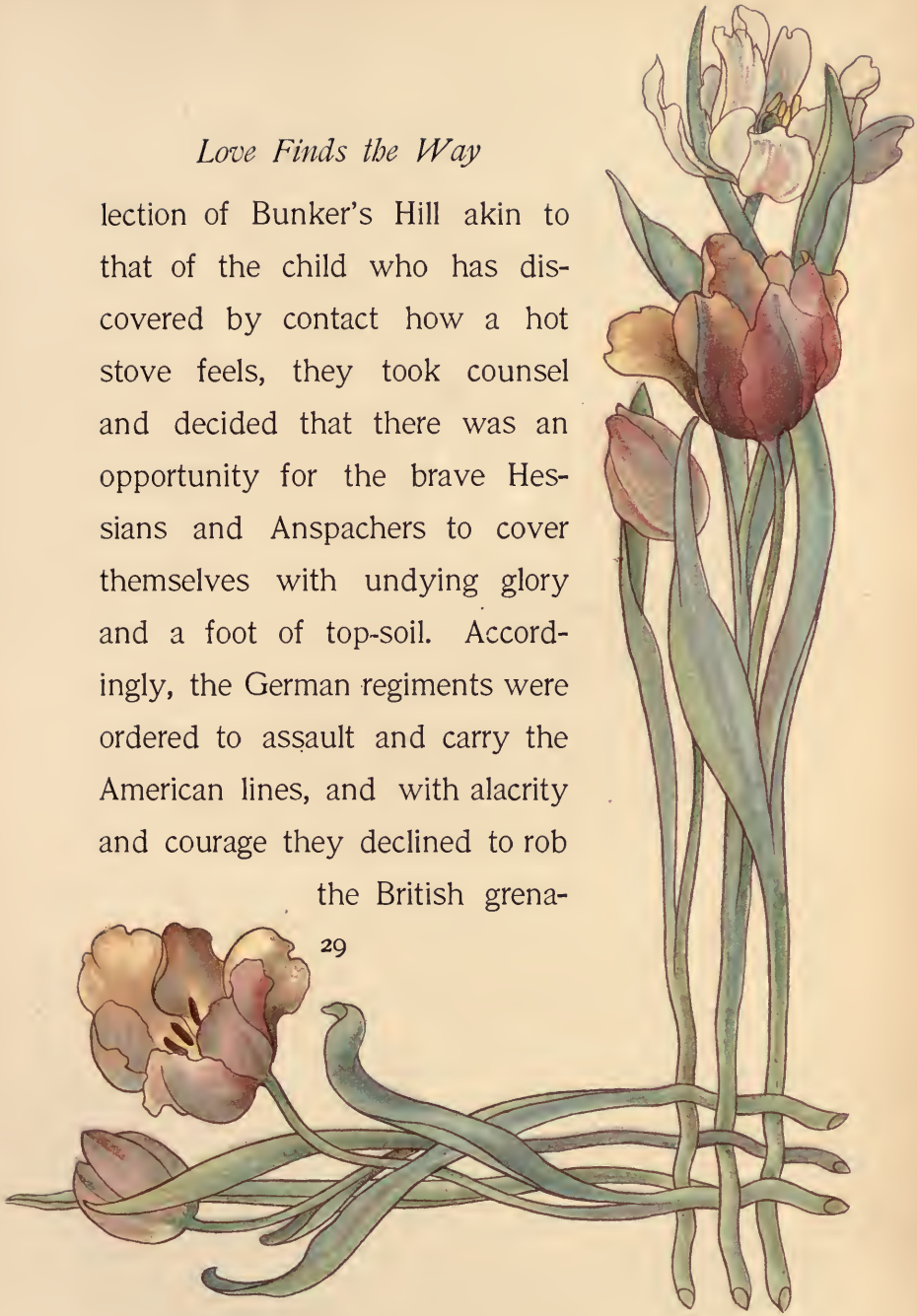
a trifle neglectful of such little forms and conventions. And now that one thinks of it, may not that droop to the mouth be due to his worrying over where on earth he was to get the money to pay for the likeness? Passing that by, however, as irrelevant, here we have Dick himself in Westchester and Dick's portrait at Fairview, both unhung, however deserving thereof the former was in—".



"Harold!"

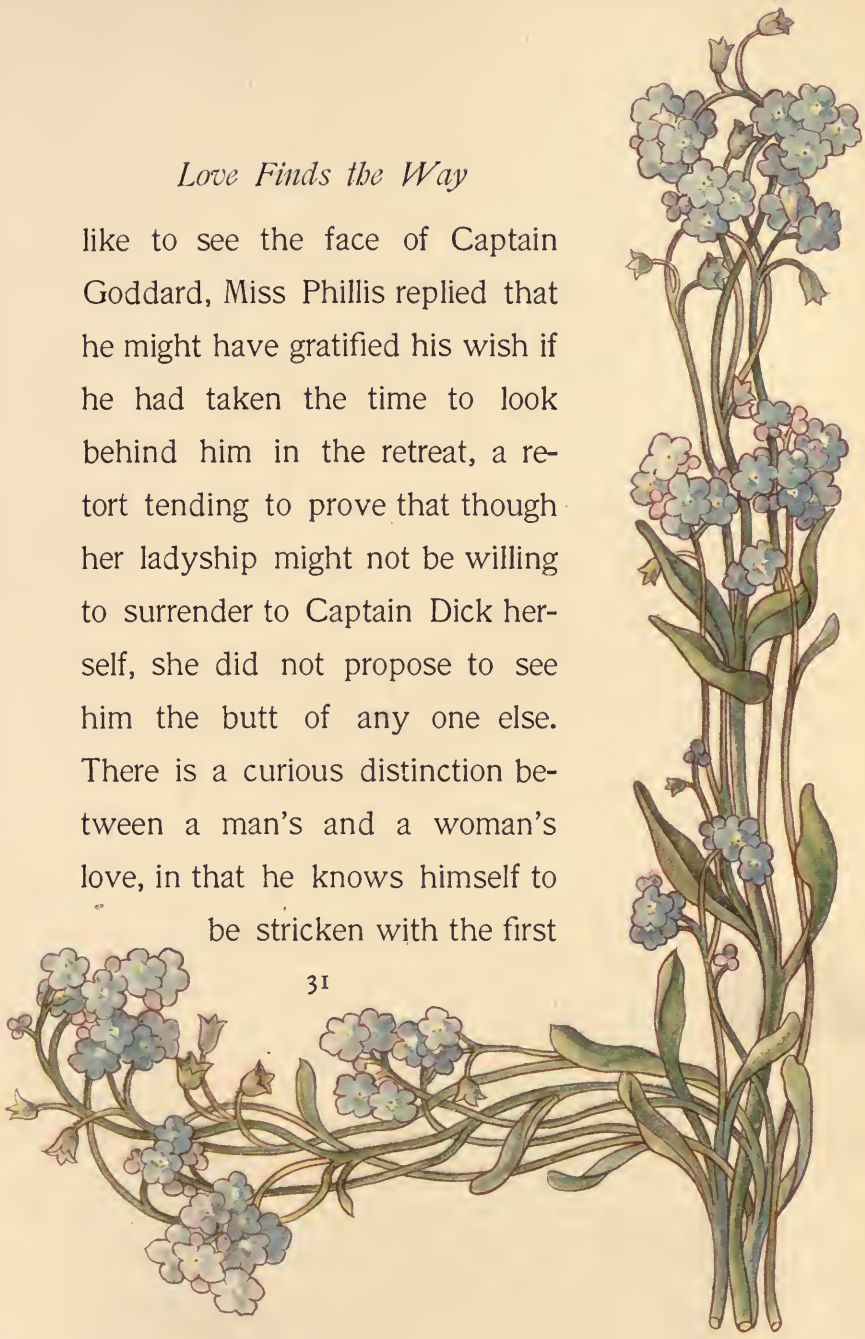
"You should let me complete my sentence—however deserving thereof the former was in the eyes of King George's cohorts. Well, these same British myrmidons pursued the retreating Continentals into Westchester, intent upon putting an end to resistance, an intention persisted in until they came in sight of the position Washington had occupied. Not liking the look of it, and with a recol-

lection of Bunker's Hill akin to that of the child who has discovered by contact how a hot stove feels, they took counsel and decided that there was an opportunity for the brave Hessians and Anspachers to cover themselves with undying glory and a foot of top-soil. Accordingly, the German regiments were ordered to assault and carry the American lines, and with alacrity and courage they declined to rob the British grena-



diers of such an occasion for achieving fame. As this prudent declaration did not tend to increase the British liking for the task, it was abandoned, and their forces fell back to Manhattan, giving out in explanation that those particular native grapes were sour, and that they never had wanted them any way. It is a story in the family that when one of the British officers who was quartered at Fairview bitingly remarked that he'd

like to see the face of Captain Goddard, Miss Phillis replied that he might have gratified his wish if he had taken the time to look behind him in the retreat, a retort tending to prove that though her ladyship might not be willing to surrender to Captain Dick herself, she did not propose to see him the butt of any one else. There is a curious distinction between a man's and a woman's love, in that he knows himself to be stricken with the first



symptoms of the fever, but she can have the disease for months before she discovers what it is."

"Sort of walking typhoid, eh?" suggested one of the listeners.

"Much worse. Fewer recoveries," muttered the old bachelor.

"Meantime, while Miss Phillis was making the mouths of the British officers alternately water and droop, as once she had made Dick's—"

"Then you acknowledge that

he did pay the poor artist," demanded the hostess, triumphantly.

"Is it kind to call the painter that, cousin? Remember he is dead."

"You know perfectly well that I didn't mean any criticism on the quality of his work."

"Then you must have meant that he was poor in a worldly sense; ergo, it is clear that Grandfather Richard had not paid him?" questioned the narrator.

"Do finish your story, Harold," was her only retort.

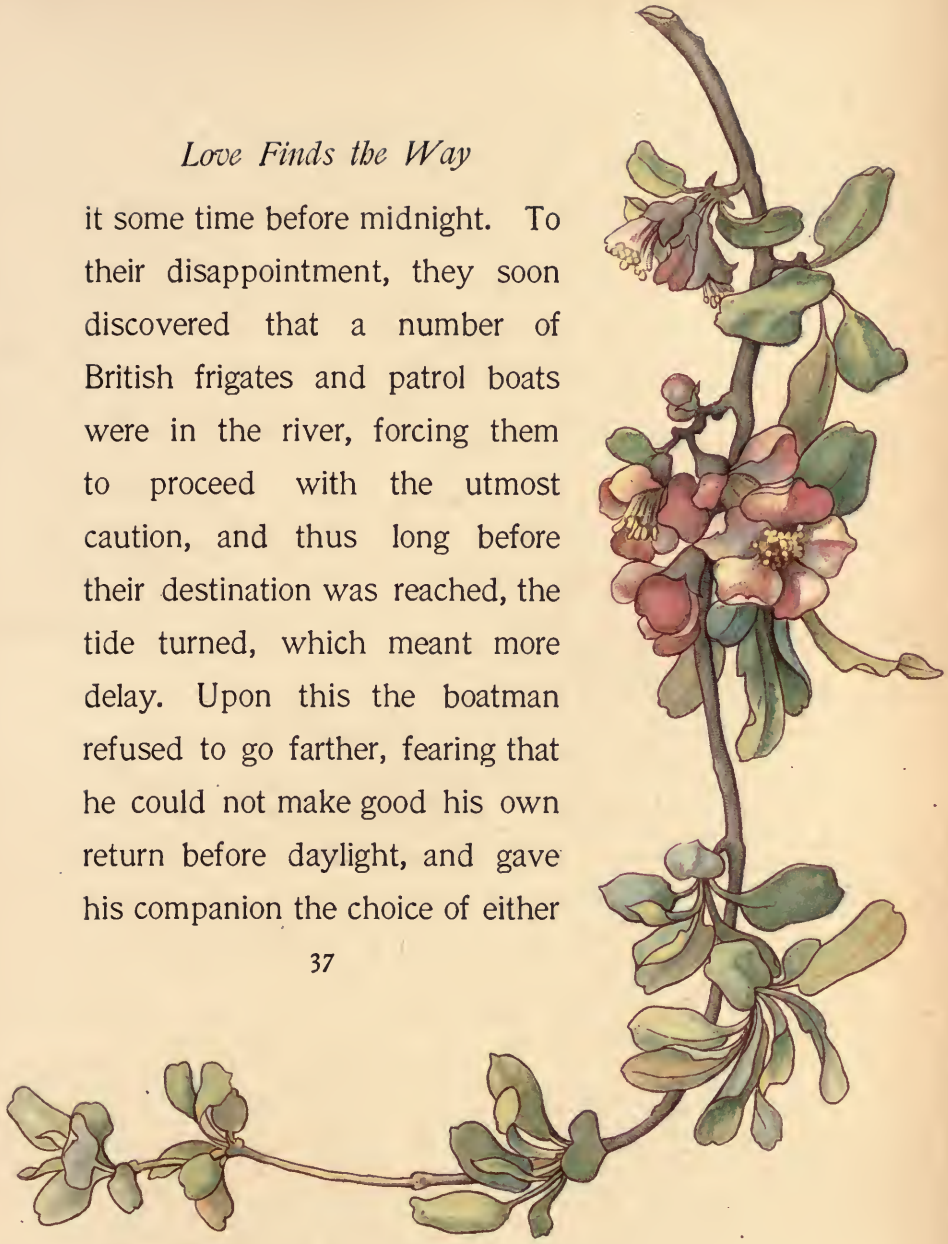
"I should have long since, but for interruptions. Howe and his forces having done their share of retreating, it became a question in the Continental camp whether the British were going into winter quarters at New York, or whether they were planning a descent into New Jersey. Accurate knowledge on this point was of enormous importance, and the little that was obtainable was of the

most conflicting nature. Under these circumstances Captain Dick offered to go into the city to see if he could not get the needed information, and his proposition was eagerly accepted. The American cause still had friends in the town who could aid in the quest, three of whom were named to the young volunteer, and as the British could scarcely guard the whole water front of the city, it did not appear a difficult task to effect a land-

ing and a communication with them.

"As time was everything, Dick secured the garb of a farmer, and rode some twelve miles that afternoon to Morrisania. One of the family after whom that place was named, being in camp, had recommended to the Captain a boatman who could be relied upon, and, as soon as the darkness permitted, they rowed out of the Harlem into the East River, and pulled for New York, expecting to reach

it some time before midnight. To their disappointment, they soon discovered that a number of British frigates and patrol boats were in the river, forcing them to proceed with the utmost caution, and thus long before their destination was reached, the tide turned, which meant more delay. Upon this the boatman refused to go farther, fearing that he could not make good his own return before daylight, and gave his companion the choice of either



being landed where they were, or of returning with him. It is needless to say which alternative he took, and, accordingly, a little after three o'clock the Captain found himself on the shores of Manhattan, with but little farther knowledge as to his whereabouts.

"Fortunately, the barking of a dog gave him a little guidance, and by this clue he groped his way through a field or two, until

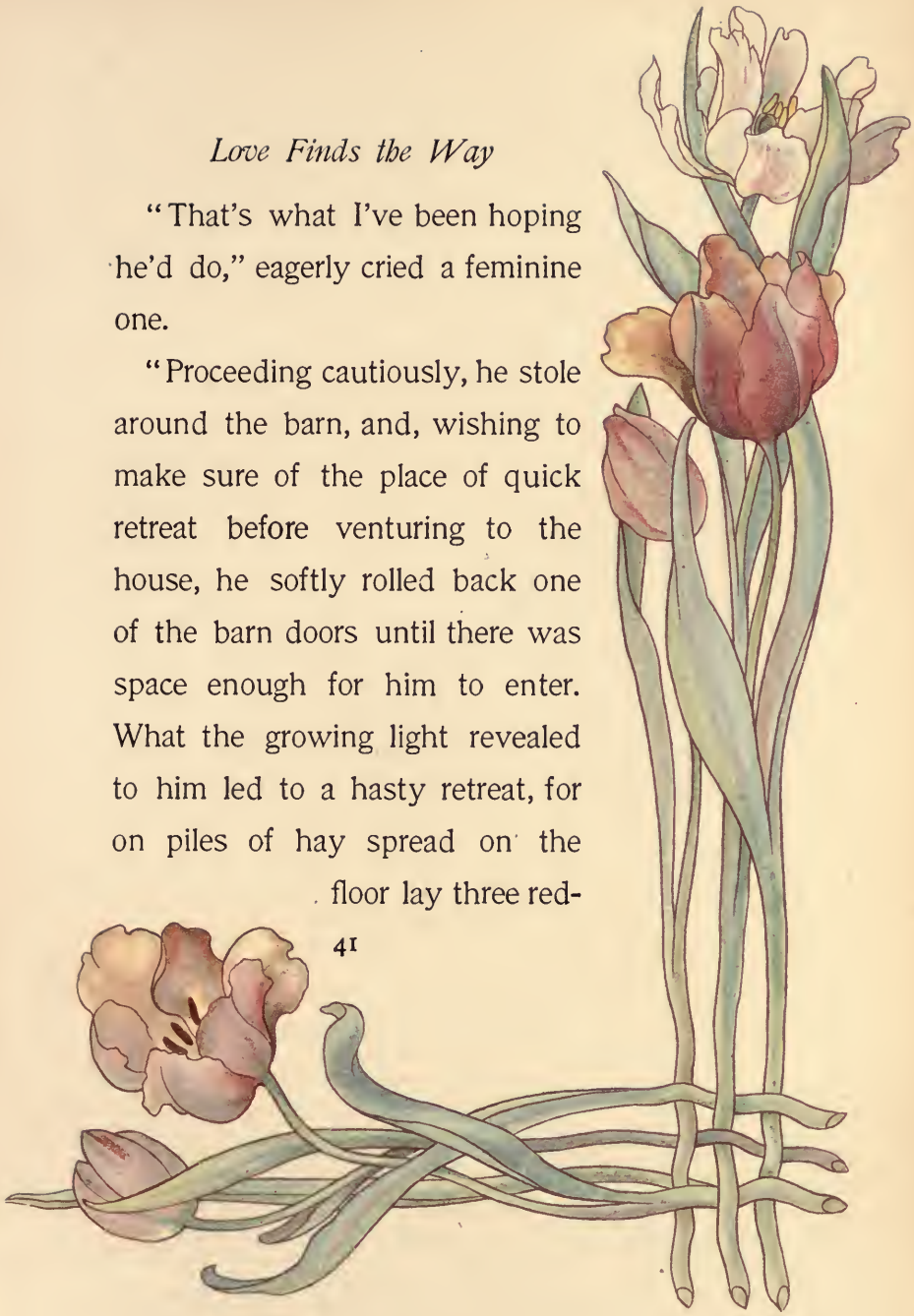
at last he came upon a farm house, to which, because of the dog and the unknown sympathies of its occupants, he gave a wide berth, but by its means was quickly upon the King's Bridge road, and therefore upon familiar ground. Turning southward upon it, he took as rapid a pace as he dared, for, not knowing where an outpost might be placed, some prudence was necessary. The wisdom of his precaution was

soon shown by his coming in sight of a picket fire at the junction with the Middle Road. Frequent strolls during the previous summer with—let us say, his fellow officers—had made all this well known country to him, and he turned off into a lane, and then into one branching from it, which brought him, just as the sky was beginning to redden, behind the barn of Fairview."

"Oh, ho!" exclaimed one of the masculine listeners.

"That's what I've been hoping he'd do," eagerly cried a feminine one.

"Proceeding cautiously, he stole around the barn, and, wishing to make sure of the place of quick retreat before venturing to the house, he softly rolled back one of the barn doors until there was space enough for him to enter. What the growing light revealed to him led to a hasty retreat, for on piles of hay spread on the floor lay three red-



coated troopers, and even as he drew back one of them suddenly sat up, and looked about to see what had disturbed him. A large chestnut tree stood within a few feet of the barn, and Dick jumped quietly behind it, not a moment too soon, for the cavalryman appeared at the door and looked out, while he tried to rub the sleep from his eyes. Seeing nothing, and too stupid still to draw any inference from the change in the door, he

" ' Dick turned and took Miss Phillis's hand and kissed it.' "

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muttered a curse, and went back to his hay. Waiting a little for safety, the Captain left his concealment, and keeping out of the range of the crack, and using every bit of cover that he could, he sneaked his way to the house. It was now almost daylight and every moment was making his situation more perilous. Hoping to gain aid from within, and knowing that the servants would be first stirring, he went to the kitchen, and peeped in

at one of the windows. Here, again, he was doomed to disappointment, for he could see by the light of the mouldering logs in the fireplace more sleeping figures stretched on the floor.

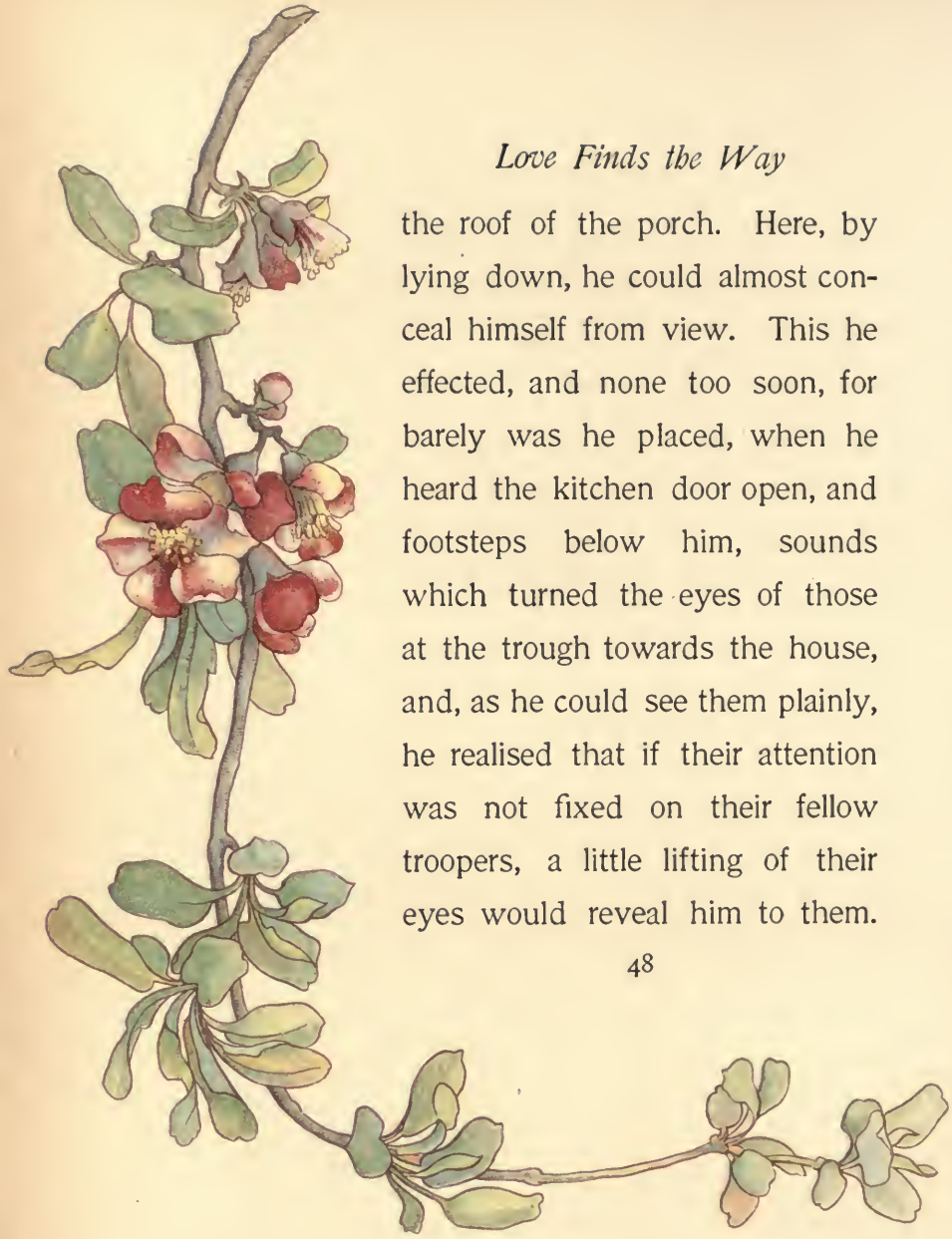
"Oftentimes our luckiest actions are forced upon us, and so it proved in this case. While Goddard momentarily debated what it was best to do, the sound of the barn doors being rolled open attracted his attention, and there issued forth one of

the troopers, leading a horse. He was followed by a second and then a third one, each with a horse, and then all took their way to the watering trough, which was in plain view of the house. Our Captain at the first warning had placed himself behind the vines growing about the kitchen porch, this being the only cover at hand, and here he stood, though wishing that he had sought concealment in the orchards or elsewhere, and trust-

ing that they would presently return to the barn and give him a chance to escape. Even this hope was quickly killed, for, as the horses drank, one of the men put a bugle to his lips and there came across the lawn the notes to which soldiers have put the words:

'I can't get 'em up,
I can't get 'em up,
I can't get 'em up in the morning.
I can't get 'em up,
I can't get 'em up,
I can't get 'em up at all.'

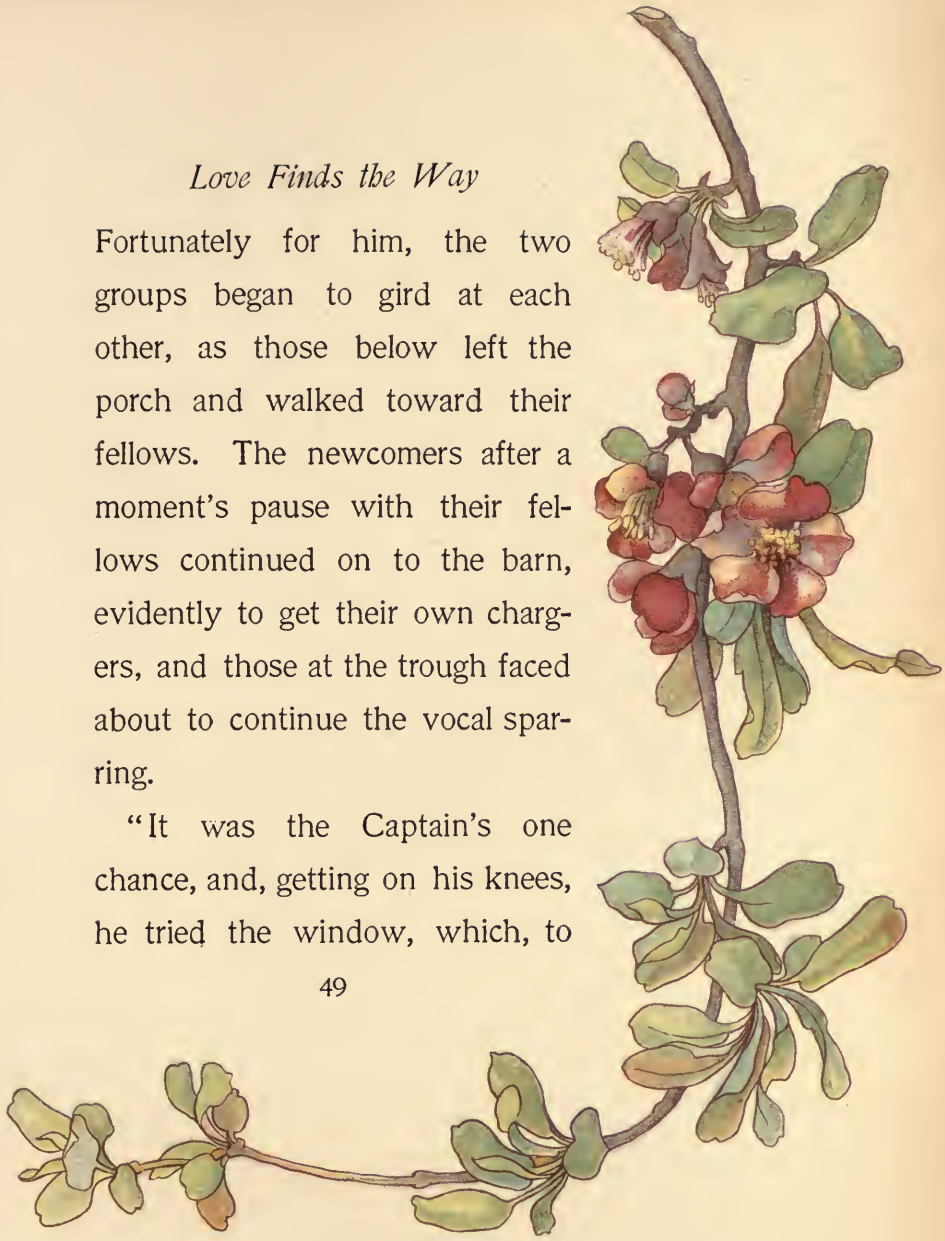
"As if echoing a disproof, the Captain heard sounds which indicated that those within were stirring, and he knew that the protecting vines, which the autumn frosts had almost stripped of their leaves, would be no concealment from any one coming on to the porch. For an instant he balanced either a run for it or boldly joining the men at the trough; then as the best, he put his foot on the lattice and as quickly as he could climbed to



the roof of the porch. Here, by lying down, he could almost conceal himself from view. This he effected, and none too soon, for barely was he placed, when he heard the kitchen door open, and footsteps below him, sounds which turned the eyes of those at the trough towards the house, and, as he could see them plainly, he realised that if their attention was not fixed on their fellow troopers, a little lifting of their eyes would reveal him to them.

Fortunately for him, the two groups began to gird at each other, as those below left the porch and walked toward their fellows. The newcomers after a moment's pause with their fellows continued on to the barn, evidently to get their own chargers, and those at the trough faced about to continue the vocal sparring.

"It was the Captain's one chance, and, getting on his knees, he tried the window, which, to

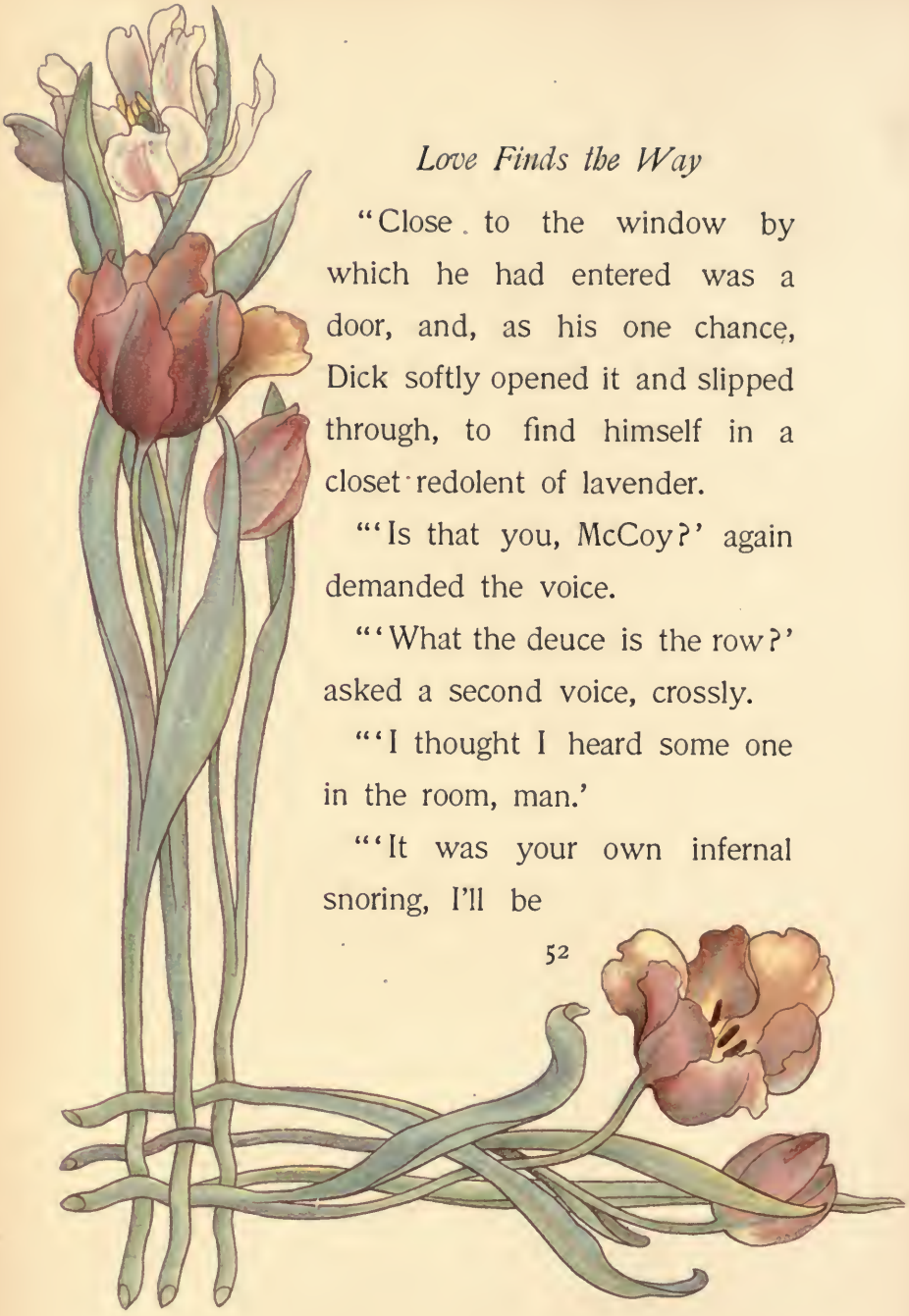


his relief, he found was unfastened. Not losing an instant, he raised it enough to gain entrance, and crawled in. Turning, he closed the window, at the same time looking to see if the dragoons had discovered him, and he breathed easier when he saw them still intent on their various occupations.

"Safe for the time being, or at least out of his worst peril, Captain Dick turned about. A

big four-post bedstead, with the curtains still buttoned together, warned him that the bed was probably still occupied, and two pairs of heavy riding boots on the floor, and sundry parts of uniforms thrown on chairs, only served to assure him that he had but changed, and not escaped the dangers that beset him.

"'Is that you, McCoy?' asked a sleepy voice from behind the curtains.



"Close to the window by which he had entered was a door, and, as his one chance, Dick softly opened it and slipped through, to find himself in a closet redolent of lavender.

"'Is that you, McCoy?' again demanded the voice.

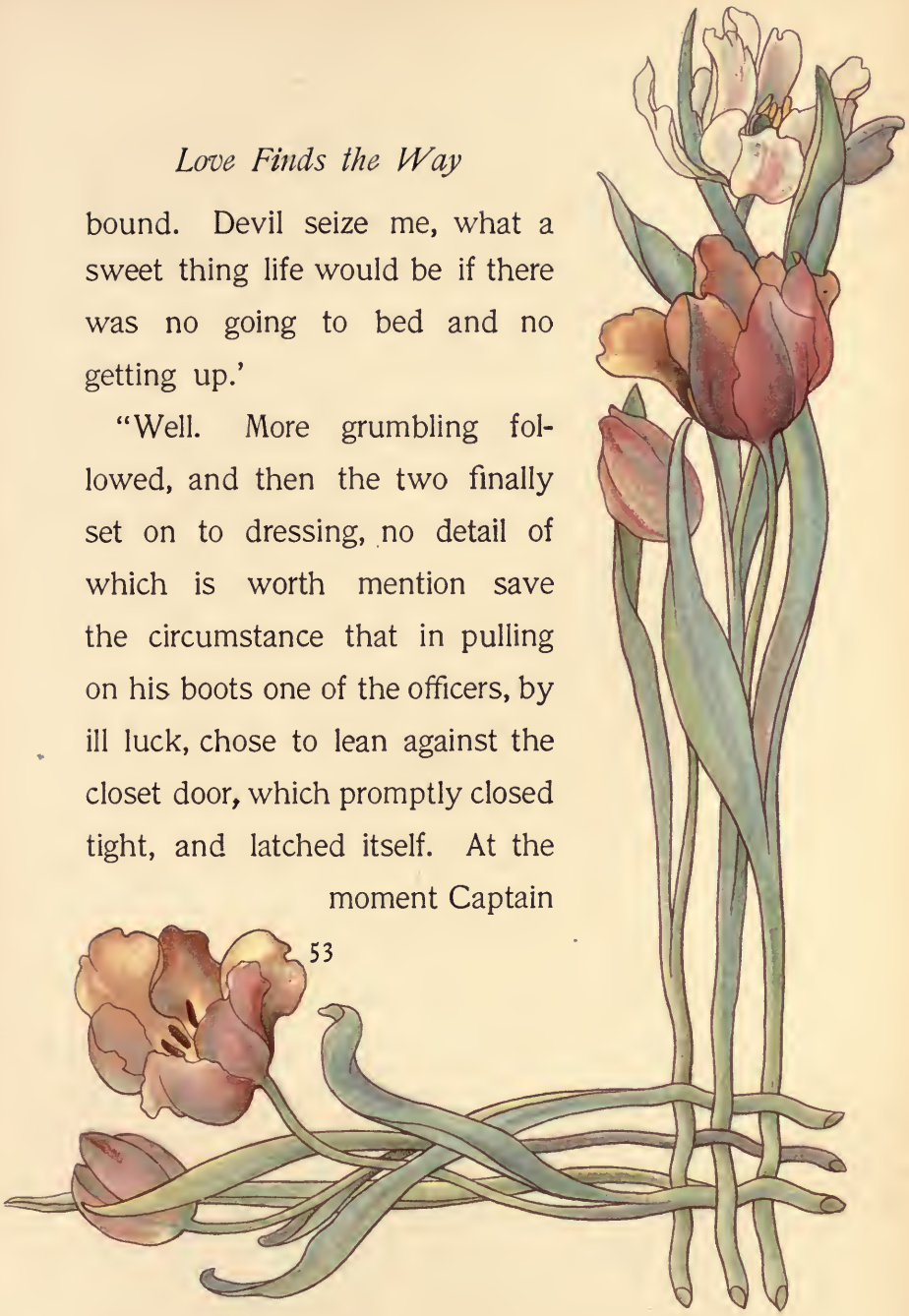
"'What the deuce is the row?' asked a second voice, crossly.

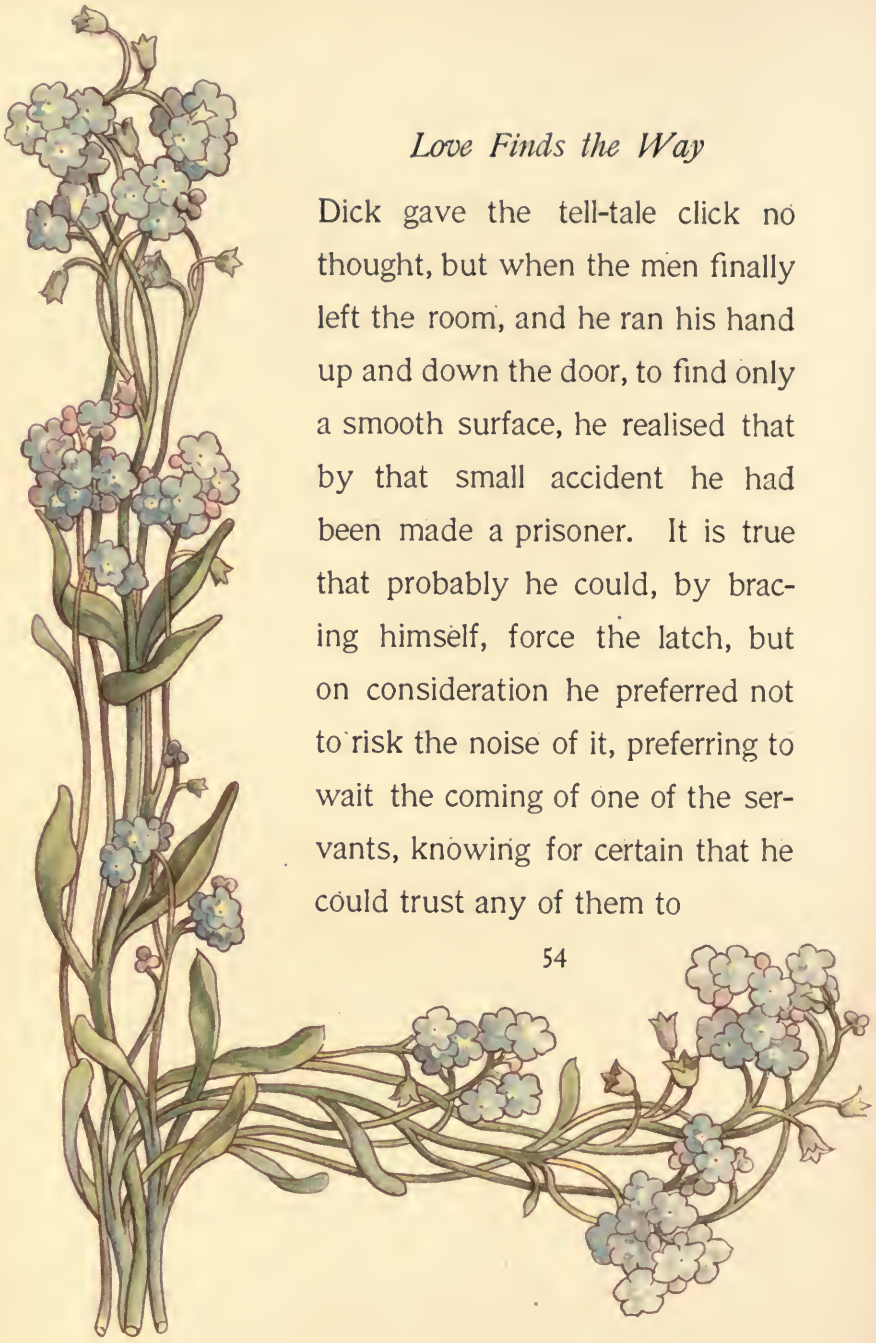
"'I thought I heard some one in the room, man.'

"'It was your own infernal snoring, I'll be

bound. Devil seize me, what a sweet thing life would be if there was no going to bed and no getting up.'

"Well. More grumbling followed, and then the two finally set on to dressing, no detail of which is worth mention save the circumstance that in pulling on his boots one of the officers, by ill luck, chose to lean against the closet door, which promptly closed tight, and latched itself. At the moment Captain

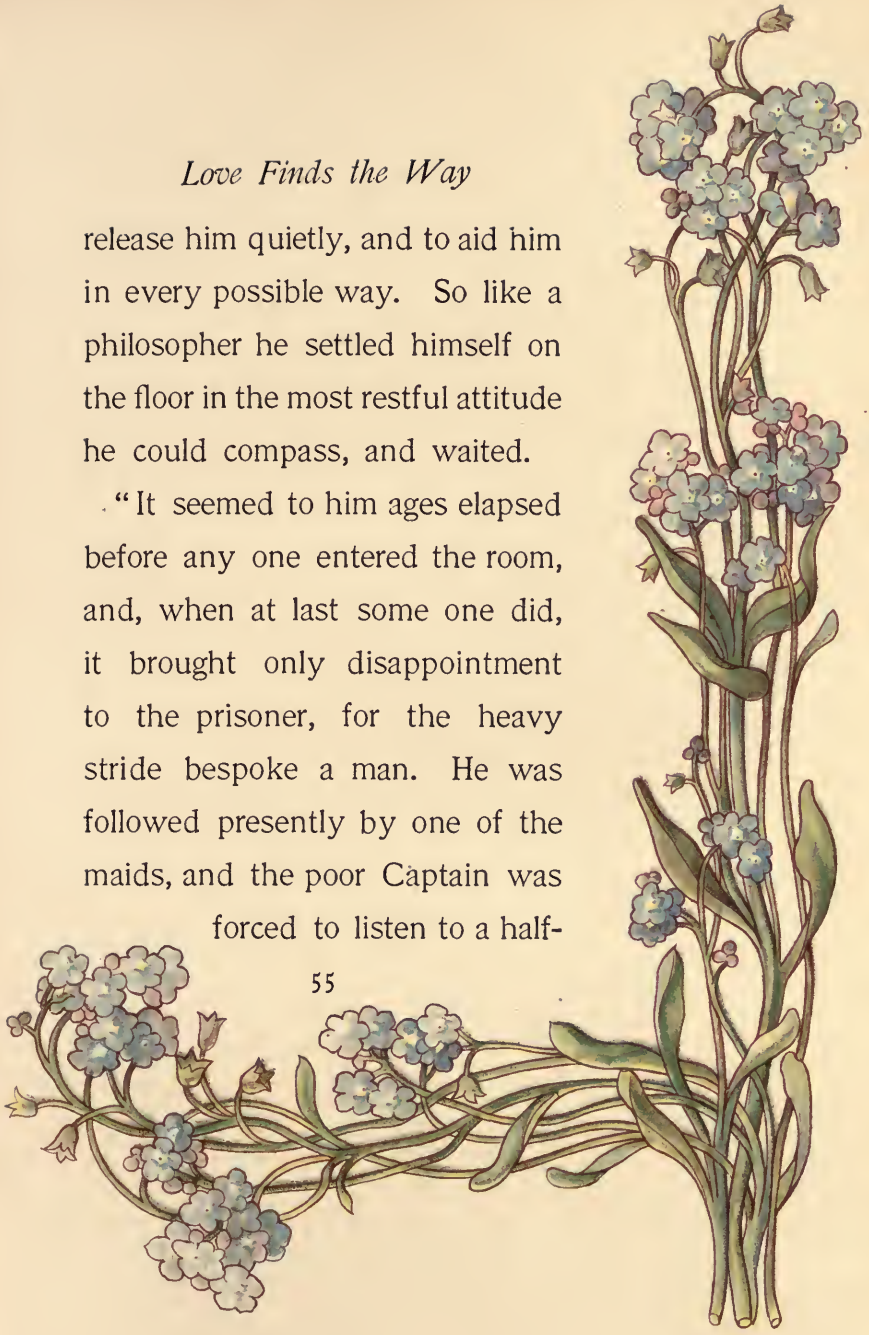




Dick gave the tell-tale click no thought, but when the men finally left the room, and he ran his hand up and down the door, to find only a smooth surface, he realised that by that small accident he had been made a prisoner. It is true that probably he could, by bracing himself, force the latch, but on consideration he preferred not to risk the noise of it, preferring to wait the coming of one of the servants, knowing for certain that he could trust any of them to

release him quietly, and to aid him in every possible way. So like a philosopher he settled himself on the floor in the most restful attitude he could compass, and waited.

"It seemed to him ages elapsed before any one entered the room, and, when at last some one did, it brought only disappointment to the prisoner, for the heavy stride bespoke a man. He was followed presently by one of the maids, and the poor Captain was forced to listen to a half-



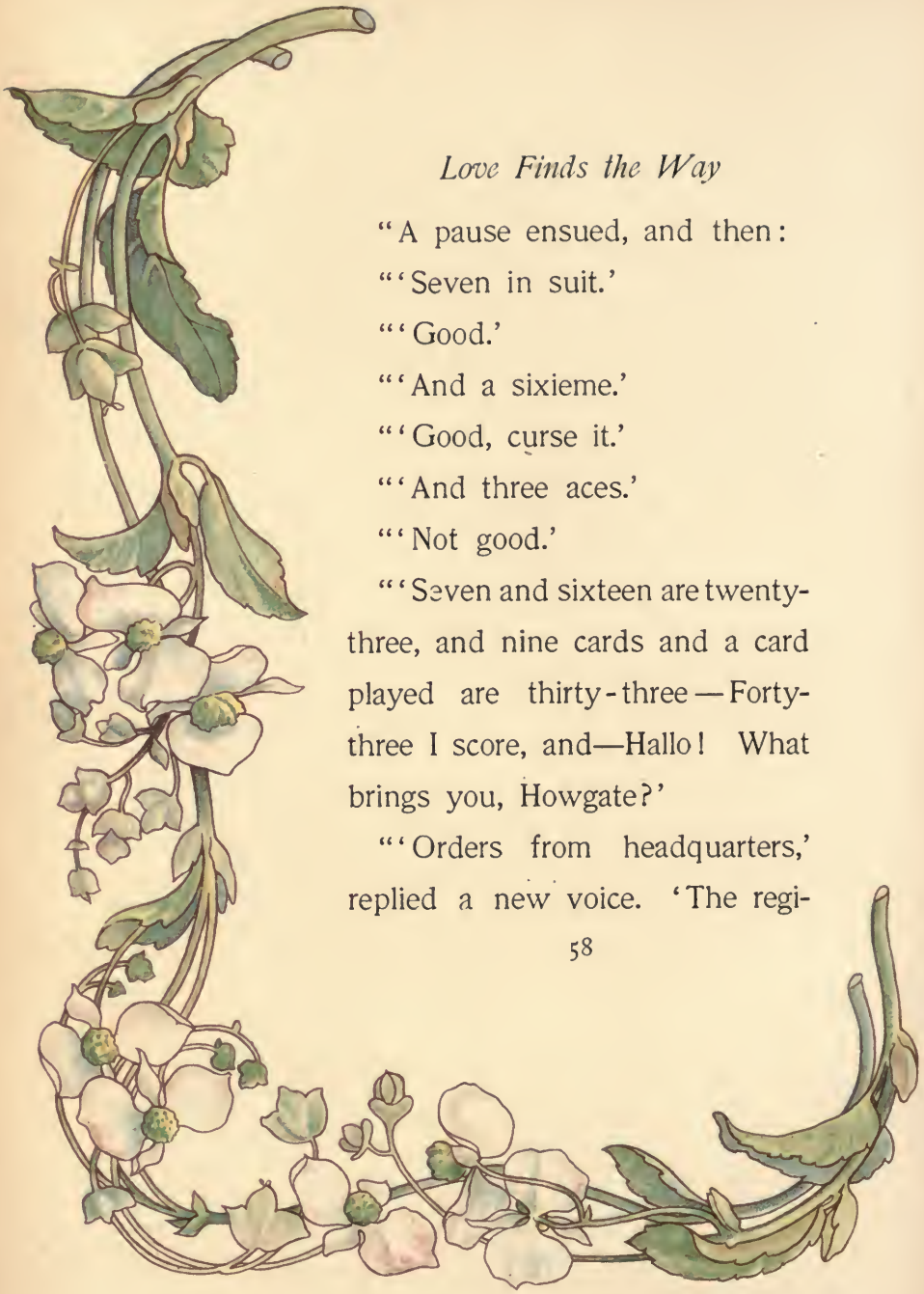
bantering, half-gallant conversation as one made the beds and tidied the room and the other polished the swords and buckles; and apparently this semi-flirtation greatly lengthened the dual tasks. Finally the maid completed her duties and departed to another room, and then all the sounds that came to the hungry, sleepy and tired man was the faint rubbing of brushes or chamois.

"Suddenly he sat up from his

recumbent position against the wall, with a consciousness that he had been asleep, but for how long he had not the slightest idea. For a moment he was too dazed to remember his whereabouts, but in a flash it came back, and he listened.

"'Capotted, by George,' he heard a man say.

"'Damn the luck,' muttered another, and then followed the clink of coins. 'For heaven's sake, man, do deal faster.'



"A pause ensued, and then:

"'Seven in suit.'

"'Good.'

"'And a sixieme.'

"'Good, curse it.'

"'And three aces.'

"'Not good.'

"'Seven and sixteen are twenty-three, and nine cards and a card played are thirty-three — Forty-three I score, and—Hallo! What brings you, Howgate?'

"'Orders from headquarters,' replied a new voice. 'The regi-

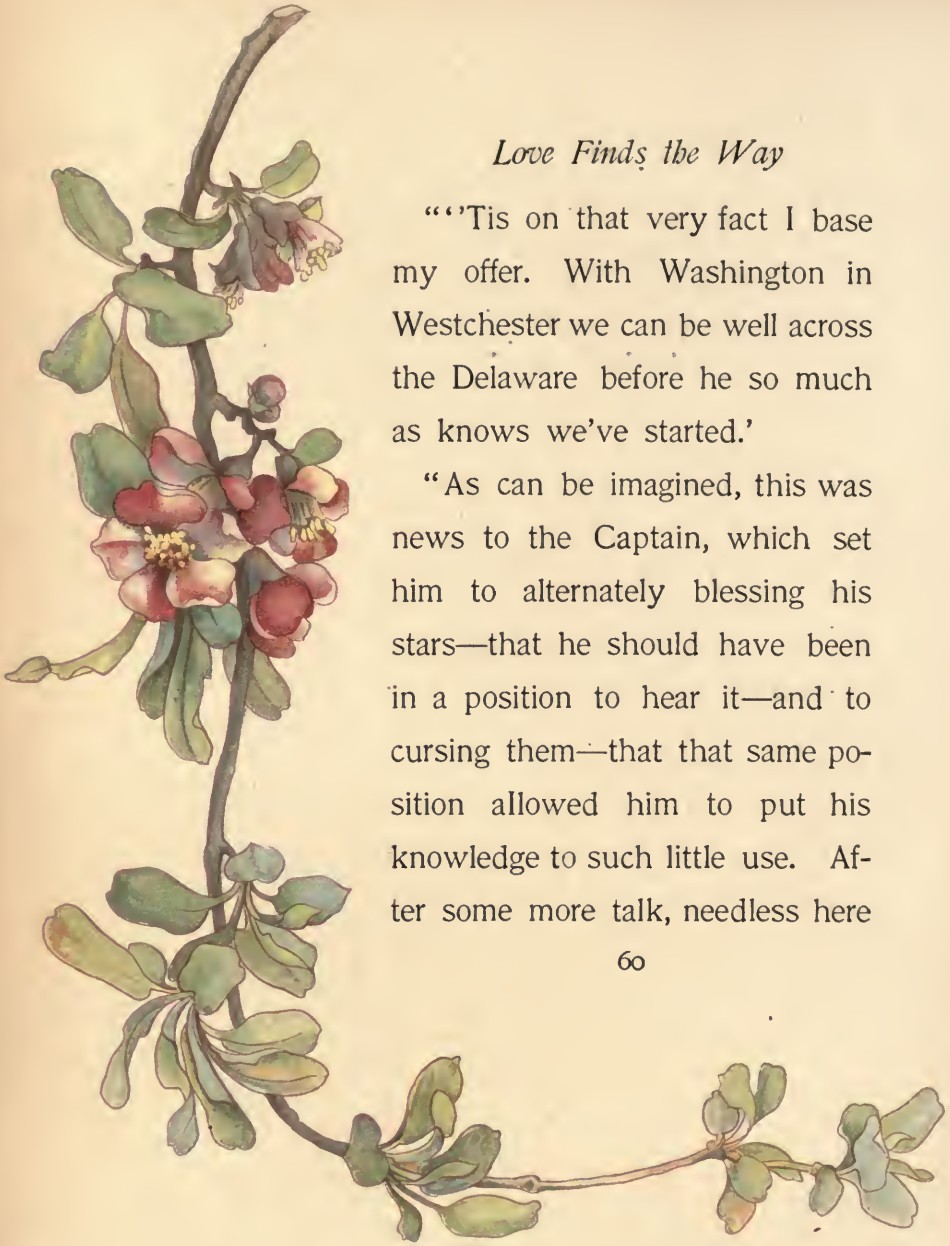
ment is to muster to-morrow morning before daylight.'

"'What's in the wind?'

"'Headquarters don't tell, but as similar orders have been issued to seven other regiments, and as we are to embark our horses, 'tis evident the Jerseys are to be invaded.'

"'Ten guineas that we eat our Christmas dinner in Philadelphia,' offered one of the card players.

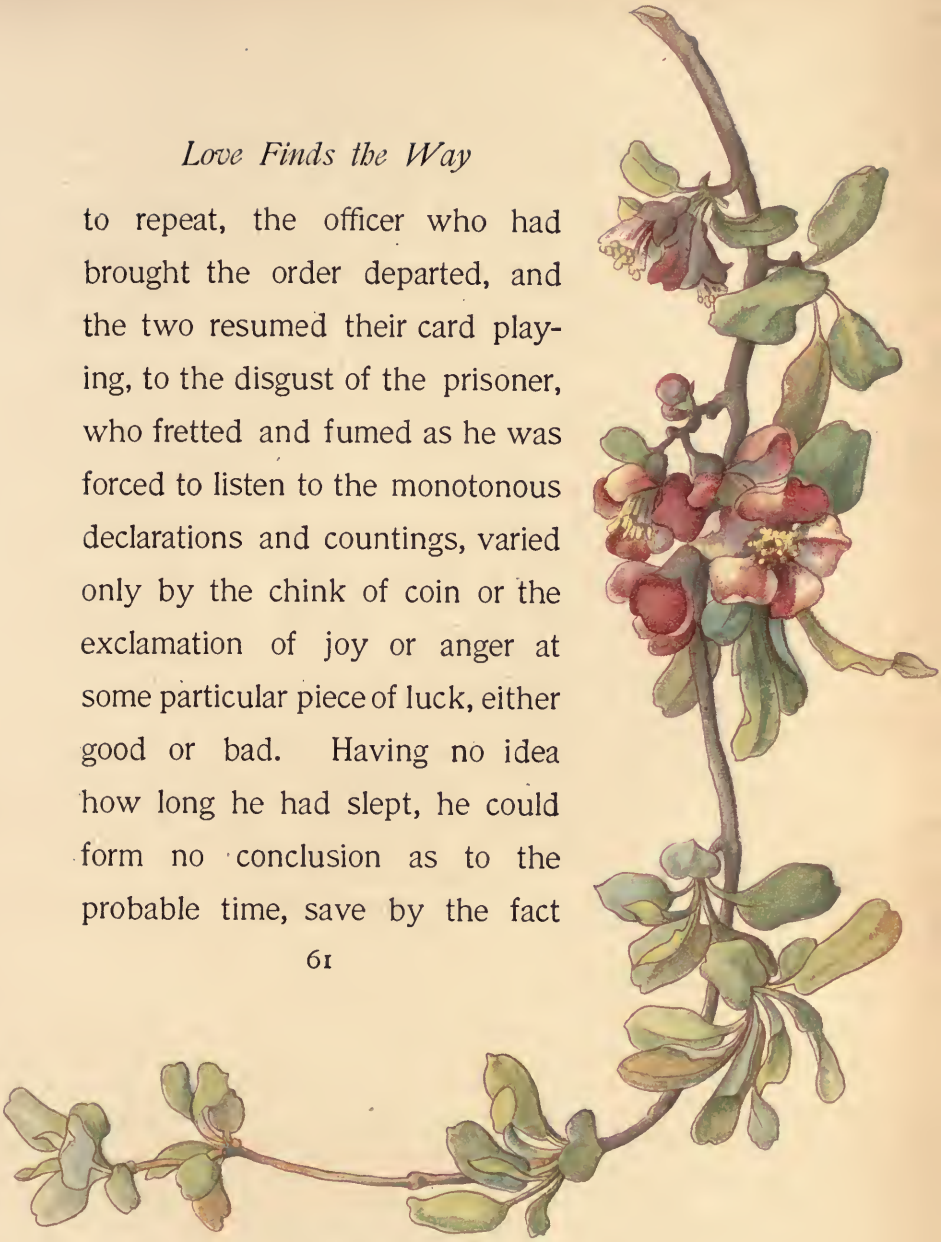
"'If we don't meet with a second White Plains.'



"'Tis on that very fact I base my offer. With Washington in Westchester we can be well across the Delaware before he so much as knows we've started.'

"As can be imagined, this was news to the Captain, which set him to alternately blessing his stars—that he should have been in a position to hear it—and to cursing them—that that same position allowed him to put his knowledge to such little use. After some more talk, needless here

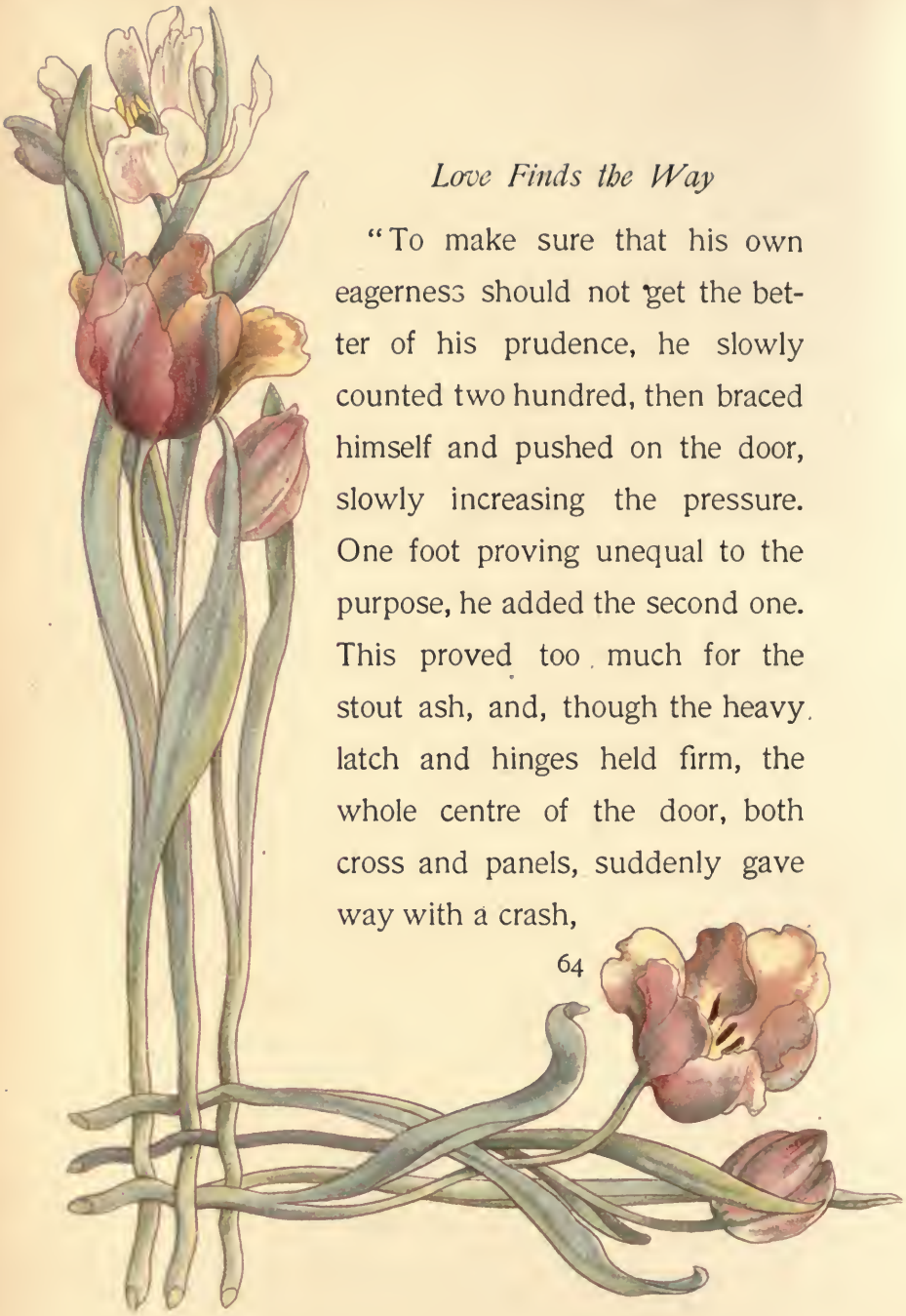
to repeat, the officer who had brought the order departed, and the two resumed their card playing, to the disgust of the prisoner, who fretted and fumed as he was forced to listen to the monotonous declarations and countings, varied only by the chink of coin or the exclamation of joy or anger at some particular piece of luck, either good or bad. Having no idea how long he had slept, he could form no conclusion as to the probable time, save by the fact



that the air of the closet was becoming well-nigh insupportable. Yet there was nothing to do but submit to the enforced imprisonment and suffocating atmosphere, for a discovery was certain but to make the former more serious, and probably only terminated by a suffocation absolutely fatal.

"At last a bell, which the Captain recognised as that rung for meals, sounded, putting a finish to the cards and drawing the play-

ers downstairs. Ere the tramp of their boots had sounded through the lower hall, Goddard had his back braced against the wall, and one foot on the door, but then faltered and waited, for he knew that he could not force his way out without noise, so he concluded to let them get well started in their eating and drinking before he made the attempt, knowing full well that few things are so engrossing to human kind.



"To make sure that his own eagerness should not get the better of his prudence, he slowly counted two hundred, then braced himself and pushed on the door, slowly increasing the pressure. One foot proving unequal to the purpose, he added the second one. This proved too much for the stout ash, and, though the heavy latch and hinges held firm, the whole centre of the door, both cross and panels, suddenly gave way with a crash,

"'Then the girl's head dropped on Dick's shoulder, and he put his arms about her.'"

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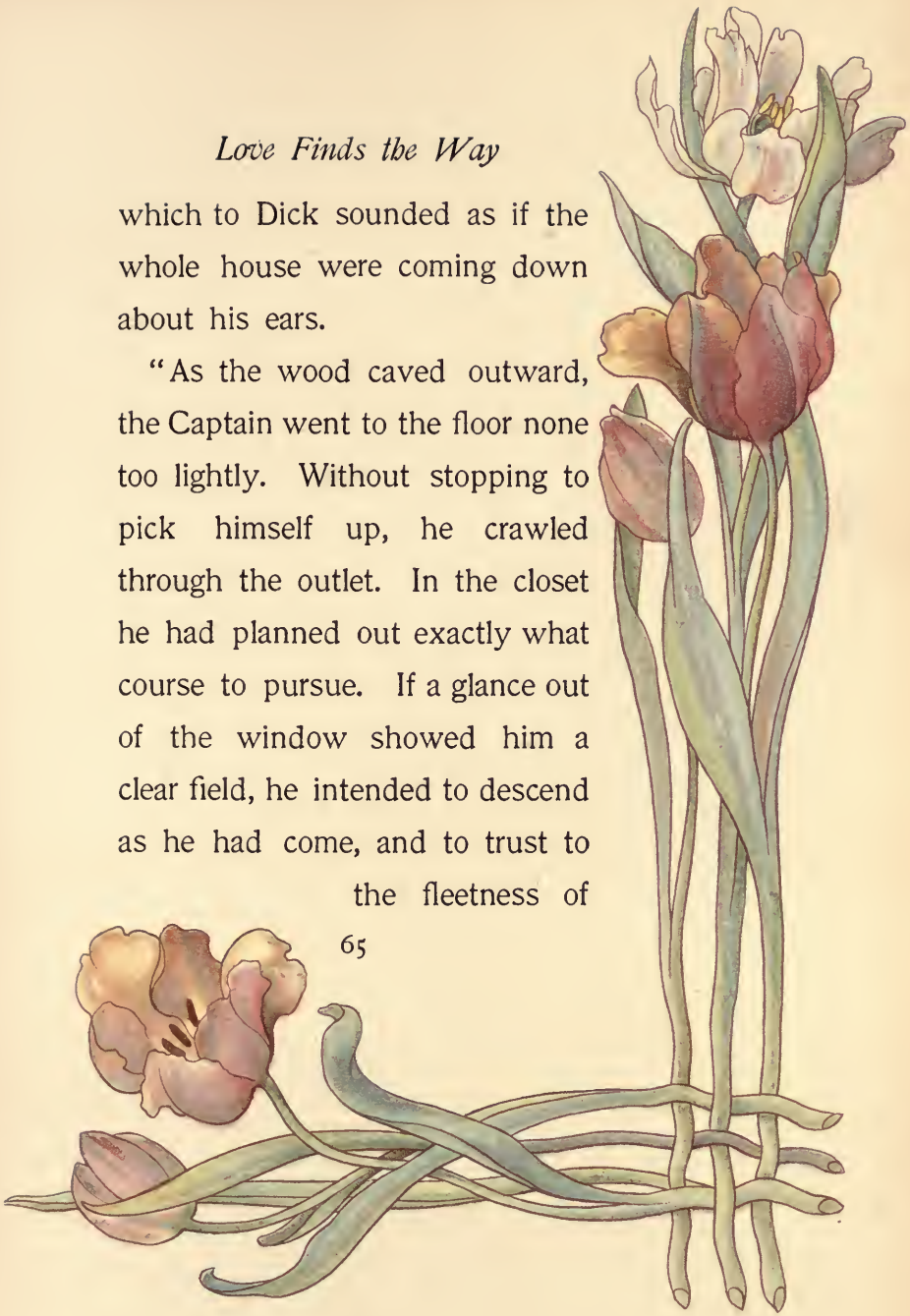
which to Dick sounded as if the whole house were coming down about his ears.

"As the wood caved outward, the Captain went to the floor none too lightly. Without stopping to pick himself up, he crawled through the outlet. In the closet he had planned out exactly what course to pursue. If a glance out of the window showed him a clear field, he intended to descend as he had come, and to trust to the fleetness of



his legs and the nearness of the orchards and woods in making a run for it; but if he saw that the dragoons still blocked that road to liberty, then he hoped to conceal, but not imprison himself in one of the adjoining rooms, and to bide a chance for actual escape, either with or without the aid of his relations.

"In these carefully thought out plans, the Captain had failed to take one possibility into account, and so he was very much

taken back to find that he had crawled into an absolutely dark room, and that out of doors was equally dark. He had slept during the noon-tide meal and that now being discussed was supper.

"Few minds act to advantage when suddenly surprised, and that of the Captain led him to do what was probably the poorest thing he could do. Quite ignoring the fact that if the darkness would conceal him, it would also conceal whatever danger

there might be, he carried out his first intention, and raising the window, he stepped out on the roof of the porch. He had barely done so when he became conscious of men's voices below him, and he realised that an unknown number of people were standing or sitting on the porch. Barely was he assured of this, when his ears were greeted with the demand from below:

"'Hello! Who's above there?'

"As quietly as was possible

with quickness, Dick stepped back through the window, and went groping his way across the room. He had lost precious time, however, for as he put his hand on the latch of the door, he heard steps outside in the hall. None the less he opened it just enough to look out. What first caught his eye was the flickering light of a candle, carried by one of the negro servants of his uncle, but its light also served to reveal the unwelcome presence of two troopers,

one standing at the head of the stairs, and the second close behind the negress.

"'What is it, Boggs?' enquired some one on the floor below.

"'Devil burn me, if I know what it was, Captain,' one of the men replied, 'but it sounded for all the world like a twelve-pound shot tearing its way through a partition.'

"'Never mind what it sounded like. Look about and see what 'twas.'

"'Very good, sir.'

"'Oh, Massa Soldier, you don't tink it was no sperit?' questioned the negress, while she glanced about apprehensively.

"'Twas a mighty solid one, if it was,' laughed the dragoon. 'We'll look in here first,' he suggested, making a motion toward the door of the room opposite the one in which they stood. 'Give me the candle.'

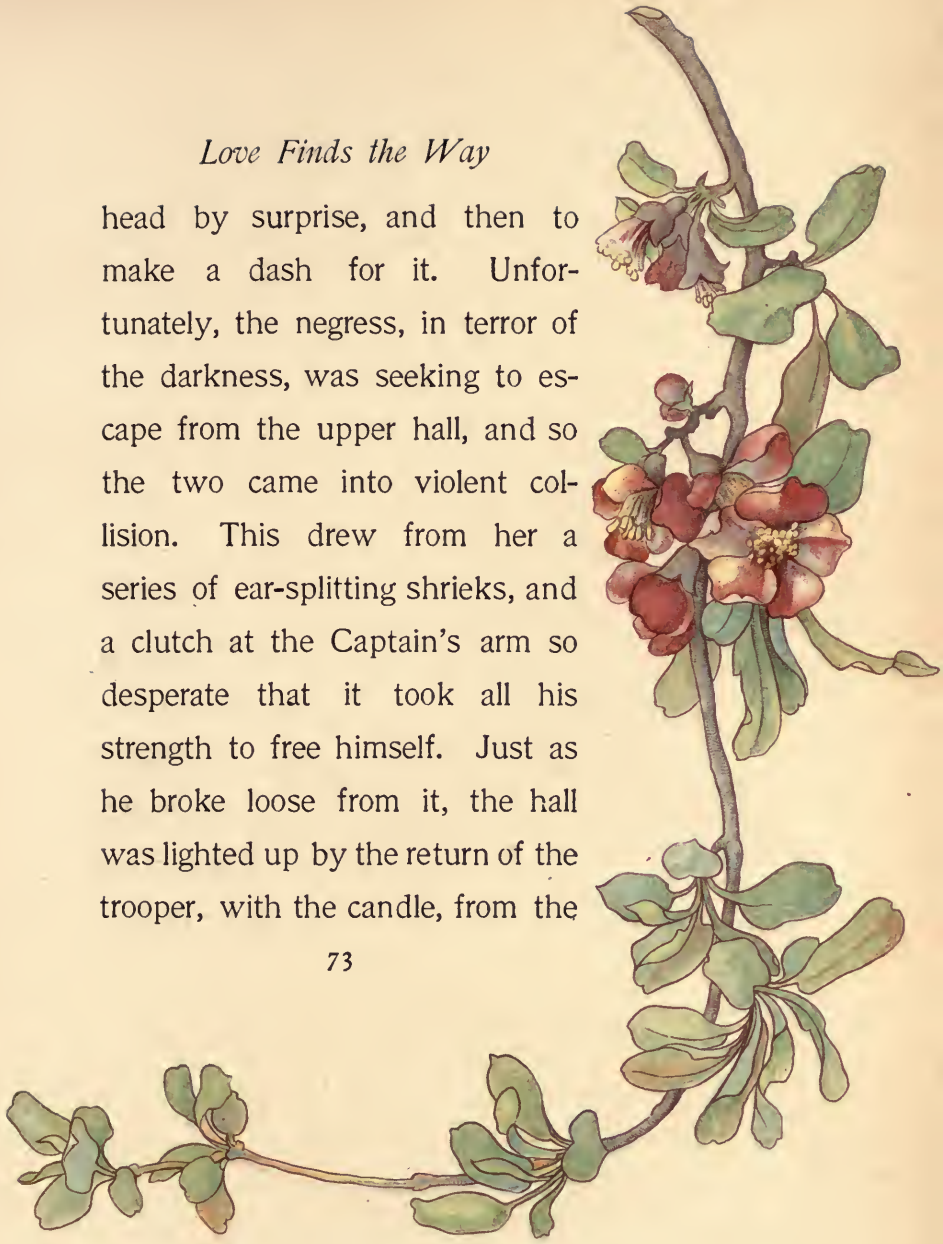
"'For the lub of Heaben, don't take de light away. Dey say

de debil dun fly off with folks sometimes,' whimpered the woman.

"'Nonsense!' growled the man, and catching the candle from her hand, he disappeared through the doorway, leaving the hall in almost total darkness.

"It was the condition for which Goddard had been hoping, and he stole through the doorway and on tip-toe groped his way towards the stairs, intending to take the soldier who stood at its

head by surprise, and then to make a dash for it. Unfortunately, the negress, in terror of the darkness, was seeking to escape from the upper hall, and so the two came into violent collision. This drew from her a series of ear-splitting shrieks, and a clutch at the Captain's arm so desperate that it took all his strength to free himself. Just as he broke loose from it, the hall was lighted up by the return of the trooper, with the candle, from the



bedroom, which revealed the dragoon still standing at the head of the stairs.

"'We have him,' he called, and the second shouted, 'Here's the thief.'

"Quick as a flash the Captain sprang back towards the man with the light, and with a sweep of his arm sent the candlestick flying from his hand; this done, he dodged sideways as far as the wall would let him, and then pressing as flat against it as he

could, he edged along it till he reached the end of the baluster. Guided by this, he moved rapidly to the head of the stairs, where he was forced to halt a moment to find out the position of the trooper.

"He who had held the candle was expressing his opinion in unmeasured Anglo-Saxon, and warning his companion to look sharp.

"'Look sharp!' replied the sol-

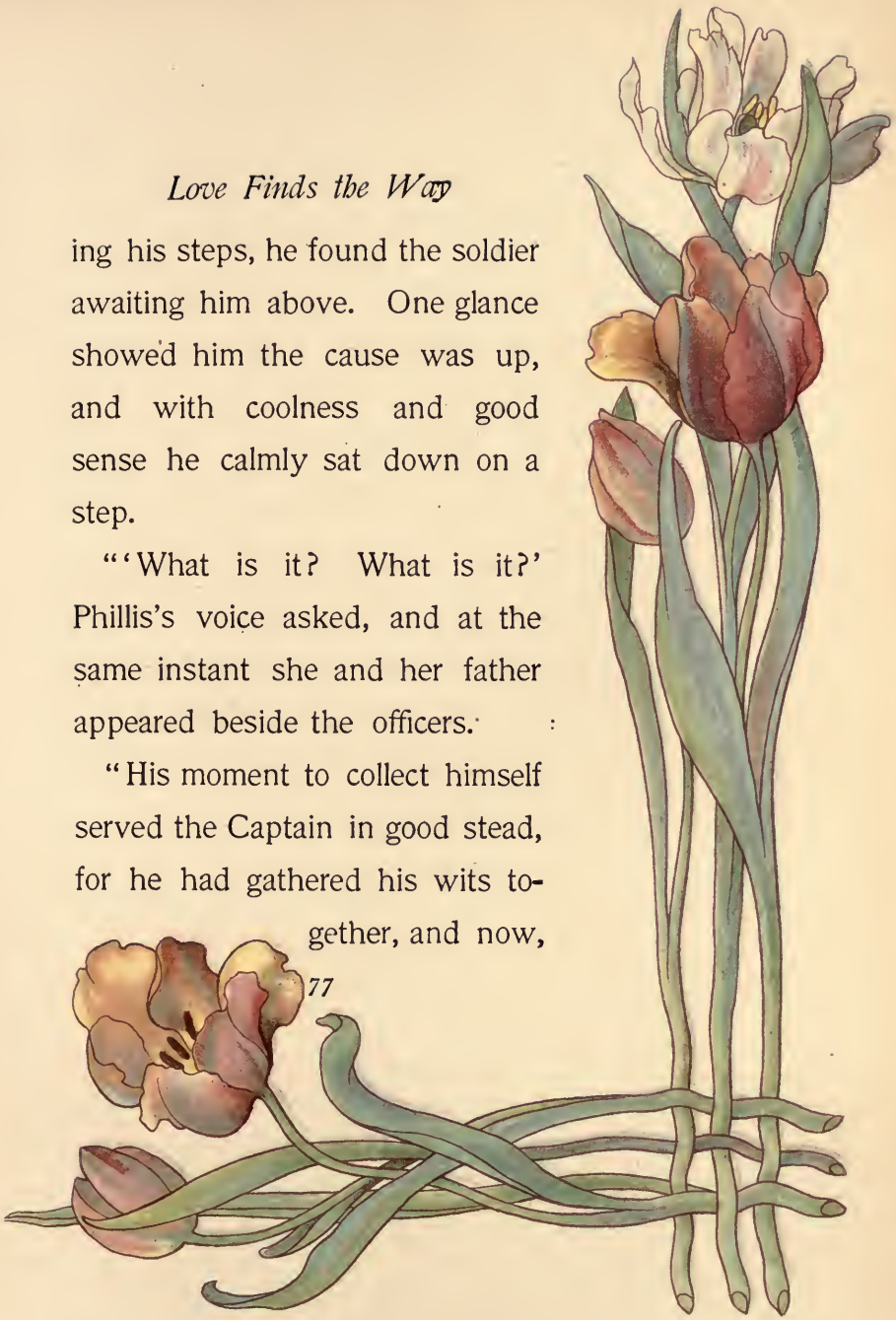
dier, so near the fugitive that it made him jump. 'Nice advice after you letting the rogue—'

"There Goddard's fist, full in the face, cut short the speech, and sent the fellow rolling downstairs; and his assailant followed almost as rapidly. Before the bottom was reached candles lighted the lower hall, and Dick saw that if he continued it would only be to rush into the arms of three officers. Turning, with the intention of retrac-

ing his steps, he found the soldier awaiting him above. One glance showed him the cause was up, and with coolness and good sense he calmly sat down on a step.

"'What is it? What is it?' Phillis's voice asked, and at the same instant she and her father appeared beside the officers.

"His moment to collect himself served the Captain in good stead, for he had gathered his wits together, and now,



before either of his relatives had so much as seen, much more recognized him, he said, 'Oh, please, sir, Squire Goelet, things look agin me, but I swow I didn't come to thieve, but only to ask a favour of you, an' as you wuz at supper, Fanny told me to go right up and get what I wanted, and I hope, sir, that I didn't do wrong, sir, and that if I did, you'll forgive me, for really, Squire, I didn't intend no offence.' Goddard purposely kept on talking, first to

cover the very natural exclamations of surprise which both Mr. Goelet and his daughter uttered at hearing his voice, and then to give them time to recover themselves. And as he spoke, he rose and slowly descended the stairs. 'Don't you know me—Josh Riley — Squire?' he ended, as he reached the bottom of the flight.

"'Whoever you are,' growled the soldier, holding his jaw with one hand and feeling his

shoulder with the other, 'What do you mean by—'

"'Silence!' ordered one of the officers. 'Do you know this fellow?' he asked of Mr. Goelet.

"'Yes, yes,' broke in Phillis, with her hand on her father's arm. 'It's just as he says. He's Josh Riley.'

"'And what were you doing upstairs?' demanded the officer.

"'I own it wuzn't with permission,' said Dick, with a cringing manner, 'but findin' the

Squire wuz at supper, I put it to Fanny if I should disturb him, and she said to go right up.'

"'What for?' persisted the questioner.

"'Why for the medicine, Kunel,' explained Dick, finding an explanation just as he needed it.

"'And did you get it, Joshua?' asked Phillis.

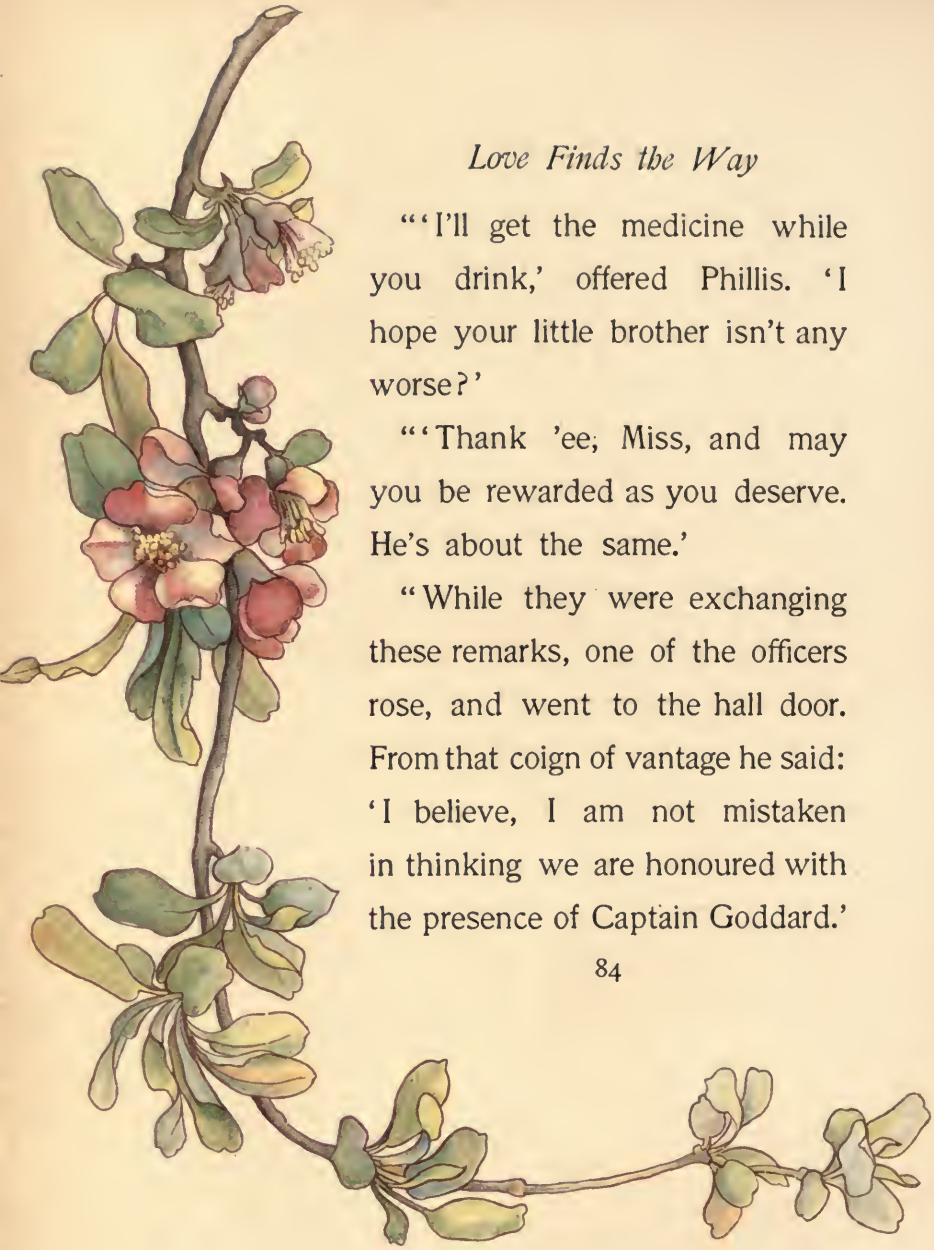
"'No, Miss Phillis. It wuz dark, an' I went kerplump into suthin, and made such a tarnel

racket I thought the house wuz comin' down. An' then I heard folks a comin', an' thought I'd made too free perhaps, and so I tried to sneak out, and then I ran into Dinah, and she set up sech a screechin' that I clean went off my head, and in tryin' to get away I knocked the light out of the snoger's hand and hit this one a clip in the jaw. 'Deed, I'm sorry, Squire, and Mr. Officers, and I hope you won't hold it up agin me.'

"'Of course, you won't will you, Father!' remarked Phillis.

"'Why, certainly not, Joshua. Come with me, and ye shall drink a glass of Madeira, and then ye shall have any medicine I can give ye.'

"A general move to the dining-room followed, Dick fairly hugging himself over the success of his finesse. Once there, as the officers resumed their seats, the host filled a glass from the decanter, and presented it to Goddard.



"'I'll get the medicine while you drink,' offered Phillis. 'I hope your little brother isn't any worse?'

"'Thank 'ee, Miss, and may you be rewarded as you deserve. He's about the same.'

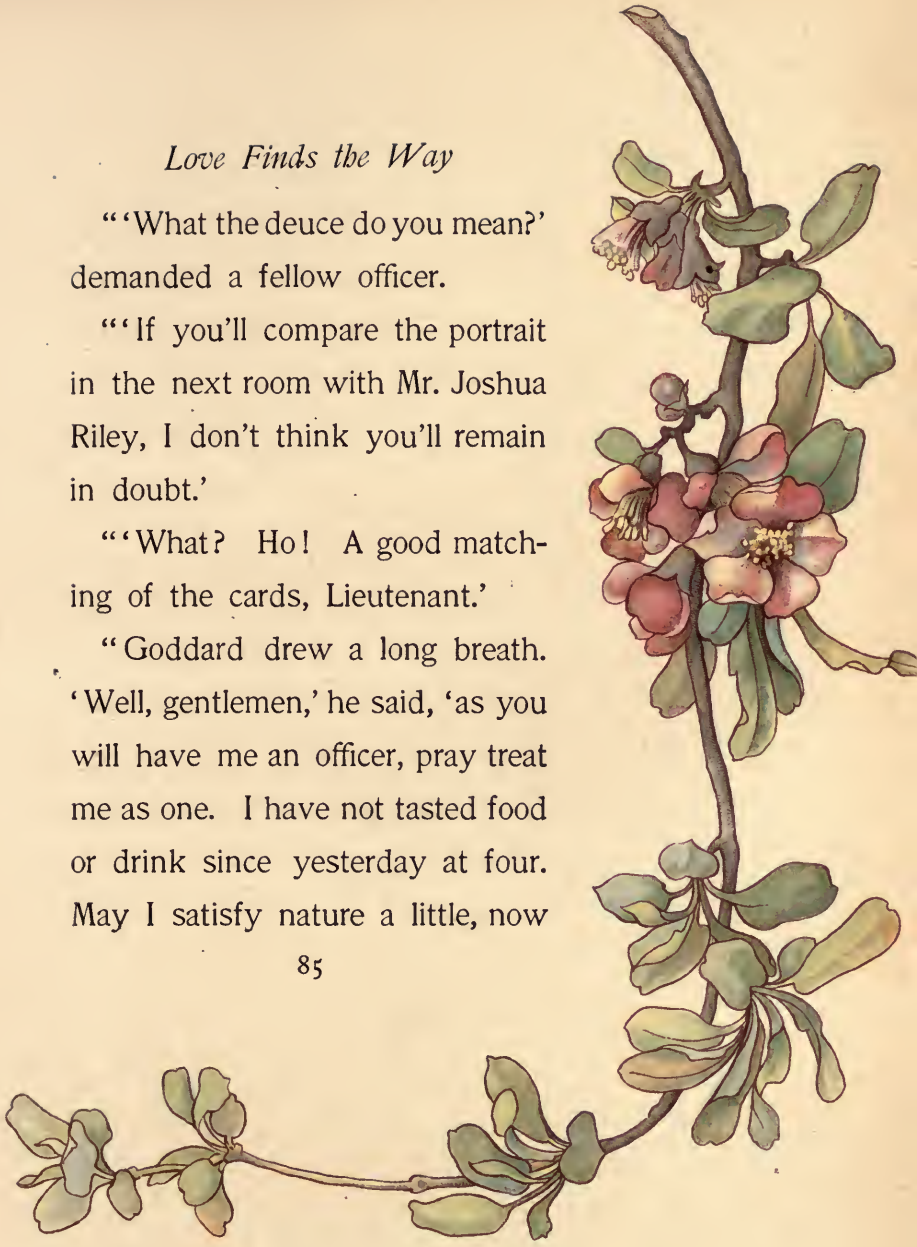
"While they were exchanging these remarks, one of the officers rose, and went to the hall door. From that coign of vantage he said: 'I believe, I am not mistaken in thinking we are honoured with the presence of Captain Goddard.'

"'What the deuce do you mean?' demanded a fellow officer.

"'If you'll compare the portrait in the next room with Mr. Joshua Riley, I don't think you'll remain in doubt.'

"'What? Ho! A good matching of the cards, Lieutenant.'

"Goddard drew a long breath. 'Well, gentlemen,' he said, 'as you will have me an officer, pray treat me as one. I have not tasted food or drink since yesterday at four. May I satisfy nature a little, now



that the game is up? I pledge you my word to make no attempt to escape while I eat.'

"'Aye, sit down, man, and eat your fill,' cried the commander, 'and sorry I am for you.'

"Dick turned and took Miss Phillis's hand and kissed it. 'I'm glad that you are at the end of it,' he said.

"'What end?' enquired the girl, innocently.

"'Of my capture,' replied Dick,

"'The picture of the Captain . . . hastily cut from its frame.'"

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with a slight choke. Then he took his seat, only to find that the thirst and hunger which had so tormented him in the closet were things of the past. He tried to eat, but each mouthful nearly strangled him.

"A strange quiet, full of significance, had come over every one, finally broken by Mr. Goelet whispering a couple of questions to the man on his right.

"'Nothing,' the latter said aloud, after a shake of the head.

"'Not even Sir William?'

"'No. It's too plain a case.'

"'Case of what?' asked Phillis, suspiciously.

"'Nothing, my dear,' replied her father, gently, but she saw the tears in his eyes.

"'Father, what is it?' she cried. 'Dick, you will tell me,' she appealed.

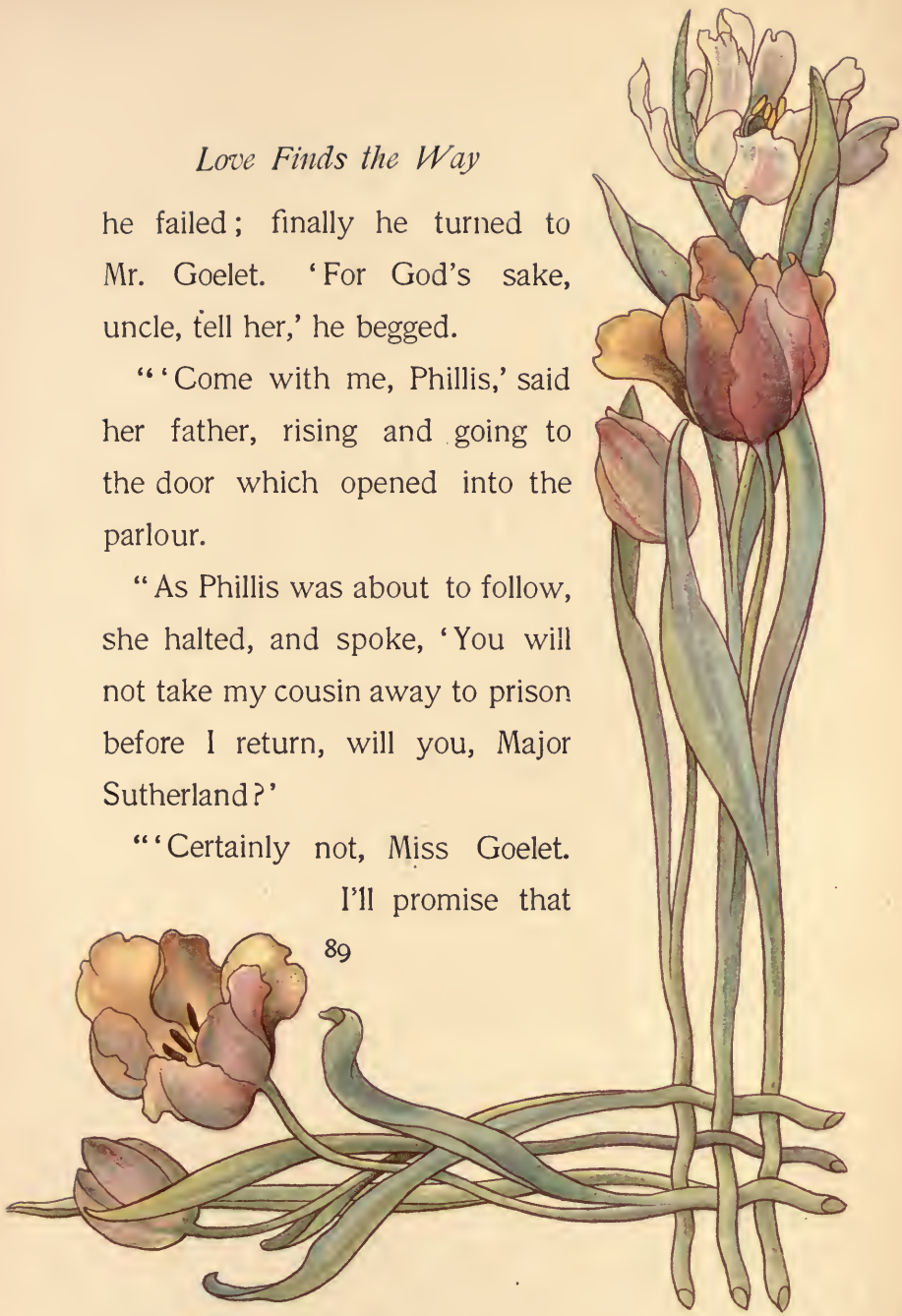
"Twice the Captain tried to speak, and twice

he failed; finally he turned to Mr. Goelet. 'For God's sake, uncle, tell her,' he begged.

"'Come with me, Phillis,' said her father, rising and going to the door which opened into the parlour.

"As Phillis was about to follow, she halted, and spoke, 'You will not take my cousin away to prison before I return, will you, Major Sutherland?'

"'Certainly not, Miss Goelet. I'll promise that



you have speech with him before sending him to the Provost.'

"After the two were gone, the Major whispered some orders to one of the officers, and he, too, left the room. Before long he returned with two troopers and reported that horses were saddled and an escort waiting.

"'That is all, Lieutenant. I shall ride to the Provost myself, and then report the capture to Sir William. Will you tell Miss Goelet that we must be moving?'

"Even as he spoke, Mr. Goelet re-entered the room, and the Major repeated his request to him.

"'My daughter, sir, is naturally very much upset by the terrible news I was compelled to break to her, and she begs you to give her a few moments to recover herself. Surely five minutes is little to ask for in such a matter?'

"'True, Mr. Goelet, and I would I might grant more than

that. Tell her that her wish is a command to me.'

"Once more Mr. Goelet returned to the parlour, and once more the men in the dining room relapsed into moody silence. It was a woman's—that is, a long—five minutes they had to wait, but at last, the girl, looking very white, but also contained, opened the door of the parlour. She came no farther, but from that point she said,

"'Major Sutherland, I have one

more request to make, and one that I implore you to grant.'

"'But name it, Miss Goelet.'

"'There was more between my cousin Richard and myself than the world had knowledge of, and I pray of you that we may say a farewell to each other in this room, out of hearing of all but ourselves.'

"'It is granted,' assented the commander, 'but I must first place a man outside the window and door that—'

"'Tis needless, sir, for we will not close the door, and will stand in clear sight during the whole interview,' cried Phillis. 'Oh, sir, do not prolong my misery.'

"'Forgive me, but I must take precautions, Miss Goelet. However, this will do, if you go not out of our observation,' he added, as, entering the parlour, he bolted the window, and locking the door into the hall, put the key into his pocket. Leav-

ing her, he returned to the dining room, and said to Dick. 'You must take your farewell now, sir,' and then took a place at the table from which he could watch the girl, who was now standing beside the mantel.

"The Captain bowed his thanks, too deeply moved to speak, and went to his love. The Major saw him take her hand, and so they stood for a moment; then the girl's head dropped on Dick's shoulder, and he put his arms

about her. Ashamed to watch, the Major raised his glass and, as he drank, looked at the ceiling. When his head and eyes resumed their normal position, he saw that the only change that had taken place in their position was that now Miss Goelet's back was turned to him, though her head still lay on Goddard's shoulder. With an imprecation on the duties of soldiering, the officer reached out and refilled his glass from the decanter.

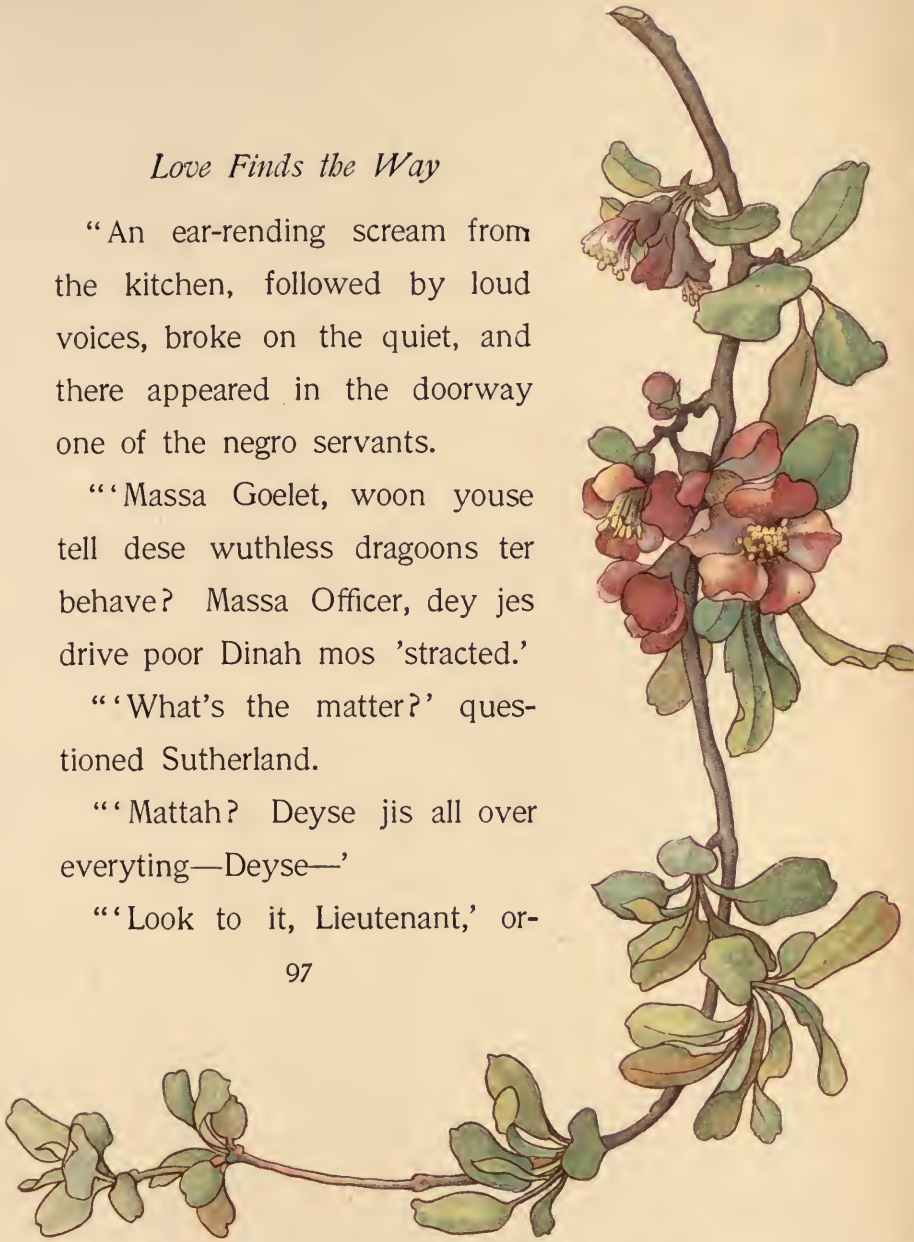
"An ear-rending scream from the kitchen, followed by loud voices, broke on the quiet, and there appeared in the doorway one of the negro servants.

"'Massa Goelet, woon youse tell dese wuthless dragoons ter behave? Massa Officer, dey jes drive poor Dinah mos 'stracted.'

"'What's the matter?' questioned Sutherland.

"'Mattah? Deyse jis all over everyting—Deyse—'

"'Look to it, Lieutenant,' or-

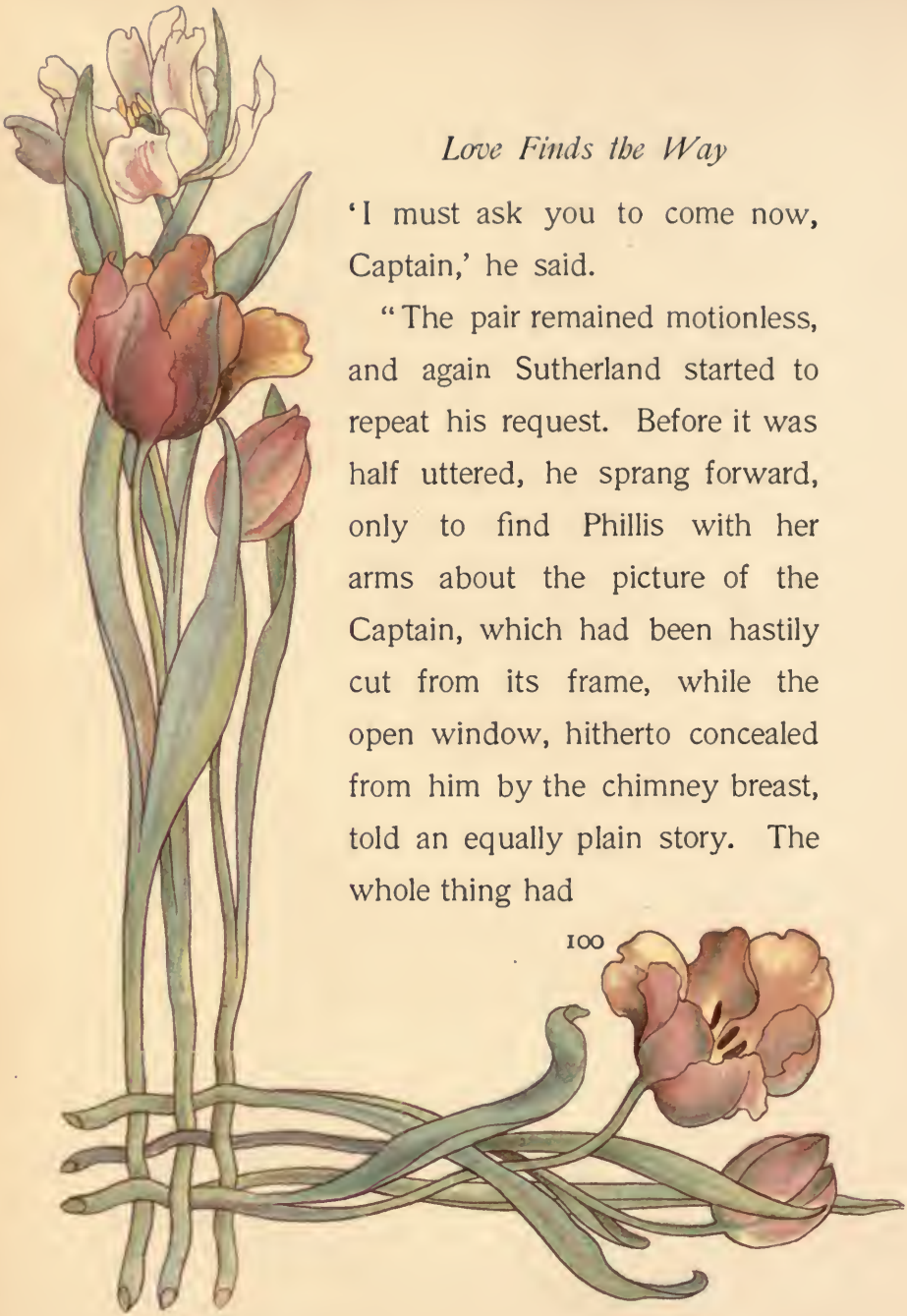


dered the Major, 'and see that the men behave themselves.' Suddenly realizing that he was looking towards the kitchen, he turned and glanced into the parlour, to find the lovers still standing as they had been before the interruption. Coming back to his first intention, he drank off his wine, and setting the glass down rose as he did so. 'I don't wish to be cruel, Captain Goddard,' he said, 'but time presses, and—'

"'Just a minute more,' broke in Phillis's voice, and the Major settled back into his seat, and once again filled and slowly emptied his glass.

"'I'll have up another bottle, Major,' suggested Mr. Goelet.

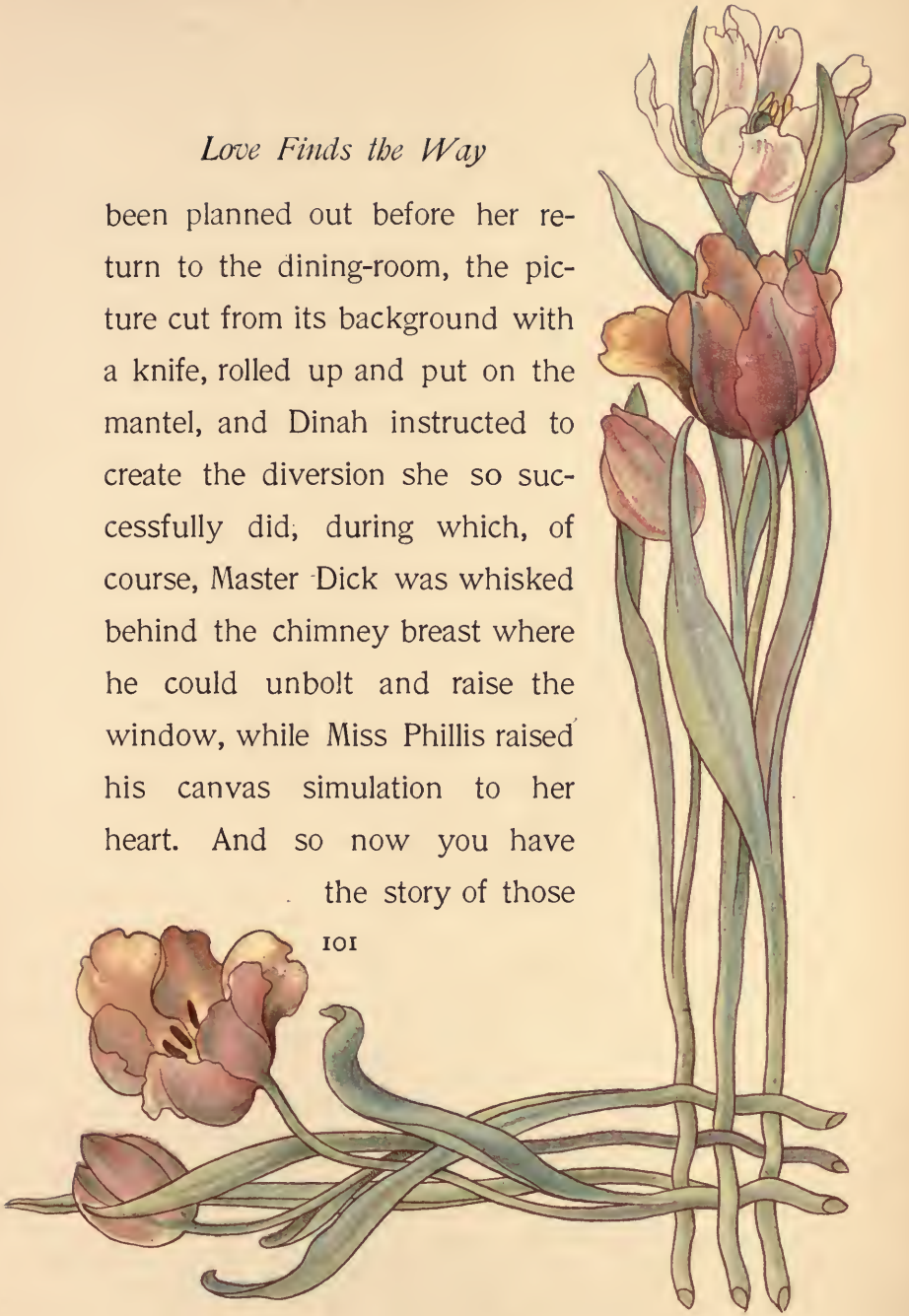
"'Not for me, thank you, for I must be in the saddle and attending to this wretched business,' replied the officer as he pushed his chair back, and walked to the parlour doorway.



'I must ask you to come now, Captain,' he said.

"The pair remained motionless, and again Sutherland started to repeat his request. Before it was half uttered, he sprang forward, only to find Phillis with her arms about the picture of the Captain, which had been hastily cut from its frame, while the open window, hitherto concealed from him by the chimney breast, told an equally plain story. The whole thing had

been planned out before her return to the dining-room, the picture cut from its background with a knife, rolled up and put on the mantel, and Dinah instructed to create the diversion she so successfully did, during which, of course, Master Dick was whisked behind the chimney breast where he could unbolt and raise the window, while Miss Phillis raised his canvas simulation to her heart. And so now you have the story of those



humpy lines in the portrait, and my only wonder is that they don't show more."

"And did he escape?" asked some one of the house party.

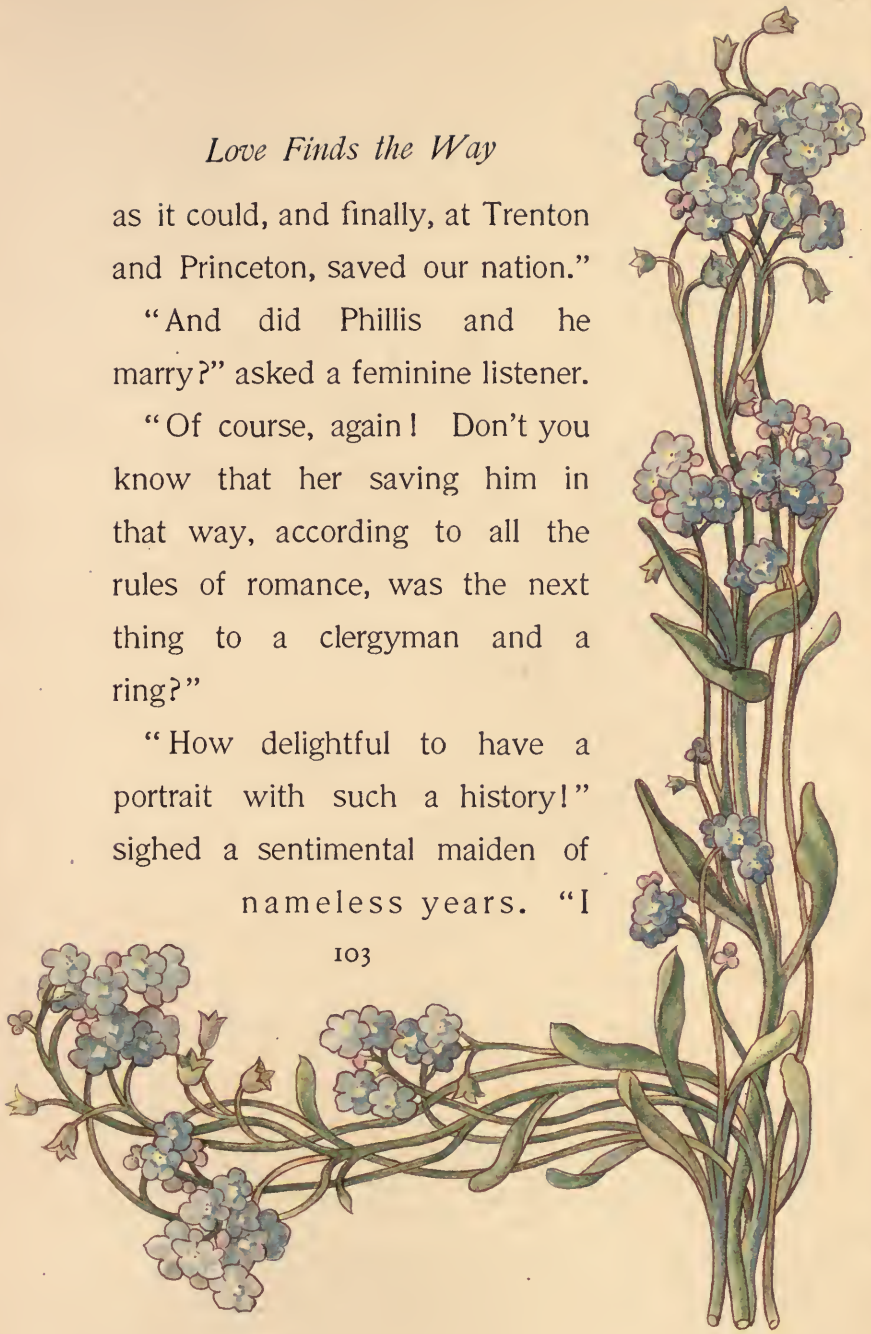
"'Did he escape?' What a question to ask! Do you suppose he could be recaptured after all that? No, he safely reached Washington's camp with his information, of course. The Continental army was shifted at once to New Jersey, held the British in check as long

as it could, and finally, at Trenton and Princeton, saved our nation."

"And did Phillis and he marry?" asked a feminine listener.

"Of course, again! Don't you know that her saving him in that way, according to all the rules of romance, was the next thing to a clergyman and a ring?"

"How delightful to have a portrait with such a history!" sighed a sentimental maiden of nameless years. "I



should think you'd be so proud of your ancestor, Mrs. Goddard."

"I always have been," acceded the hostess.

"And from to-night I think my cousin will be prouder than ever, I predict," asserted the story teller, "because much of this was new to her, and I think she ought to thank me for grubbing it out of musty old papers."

"But I say," remarked one of the older men, "that English ma-

jor was five kinds of a fool, it seems to me."

"I think he was fairly typical of the British officer," agreed the story teller.

"And do you mean to say that he could mistake the portrait for the prisoner, with the one in full uniform and three-cornered hat, and the other in farmer's clothes, and I presume, from what he had gone through, bareheaded?" demanded an objector.

"You are one of the fellows

whom it is impossible to please," protested Mr. Goddard. "I've told you the story; now why do you want to pick holes in it?"

"But it's impossible to believe that he—"

"Oh, dear, here's another one. You wanted a story, and I've done my best. If you had asked for history, I'd have taken down one of the reports of the Historical Manuscripts Commission, over there, and read aloud to you a series of documents. But that isn't what

you, or the public want, and you know it. An ox team couldn't drag either of you to spend an hour on such a book. 'Tell us a story,' you beg, 'in which the daring hero gets idiotically into the most desperate of dangers, and just as everything is lost, let the brave and beautiful heroine save him by some wonderful device, and let him save the country, and when the dove of peace appears with the olive branch, which but for these twain would

never have been, let them be married, under the stars and stripes, and roses."

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